Adventure

February 1st

The Orinoco, *a* bold rider *and*

Salt

A Complete Novelette

By Arthur O. Friel

The Faith *of the* Sea

The Covenant of the Craddocks

By Albert Richard Wetjen

The Temple *of* False Sanctuary

Sunset

By Sydney Herschel Small

An Account *of a* Strange Captivity

The Boy John Jewitt

An Article

By Agnes C. Laut

Published twice a month 25c

When each COLT arm has passed these rigid tests—

Each Colt part is micrometer gauged by fire arm experts, many of whom have been in the Colt organization for 50 years or more

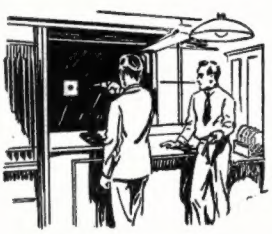
EACH item of design, every bit of metal, every part, each mechanical detail that goes to make up a Colt Revolver or Automatic Pistol is proven for strength, adaptability, proper adjustment and operation before the arm is passed.

Compare this painstaking care with the methods and materials of less reliable fire arms makers.

The perfect operation of each Colt arm is insured by experienced inspectors who test every mechanical action

In selecting a Colt you take no risk because its makers never rely upon chance. The safety of your property, your loved ones—perhaps your life—is too precious to be entrusted to any but the finest fire arm, much less a "bargain" of doubtful foreign origin.

Colt safety features alone are well worth the small difference in cost, as any reliable dealer will tell you.



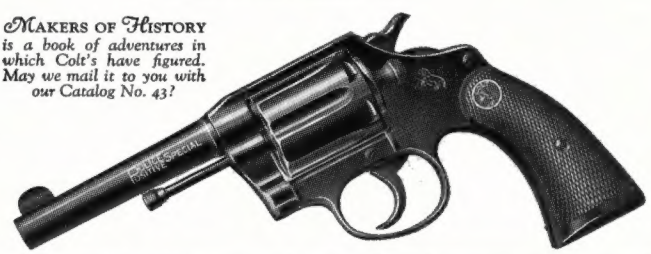
Finally, Colt accuracy and exactness of action are demonstrated by firing round after round at the Colt testing range

COLT'S PATENT FIRE ARMS MFG. CO.

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

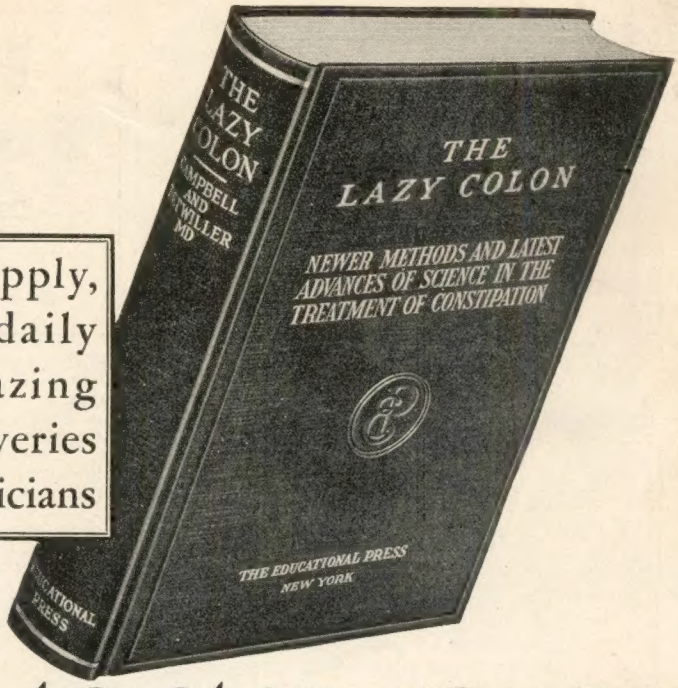
Phil. B. Bekeart Co., *Pacific Coast Representative*
717 Market St., San Francisco, Cal.

MAKERS OF HISTORY is a book of adventures in which Colt's have figured. May we mail it to you with our Catalog No. 43?



THE ARM OF LAW AND ORDER

How you can apply, in your own daily life, the amazing scientific discoveries of over 300 physicians


THE LAZY COLON
CAMPBELL AND DETWILLER MD
THE LAZY COLON
NEWER METHODS AND LATEST ADVANCES OF SCIENCE IN THE TREATMENT OF CONSTIPATION
THE EDUCATIONAL PRESS NEW YORK

On how to stay young

YOU can prolong your youth twenty, thirty or an even greater number of years. It is not necessarily short lived. For details, see below.

Scientists have discovered that the aging process (which so mars human bodies, particularly women's) is not a matter of just so many years but actually a chronic disease. The cause is a combination of bad habits. As Seneca once wrote "Man does not die. He kills himself."

Hundreds of cases are on record of long-prolonged youth attained even before modern scientific knowledge became available.

The Case of Ninon de Lenclos

Probably the most famous case of retained youth is that of Ninon de Lenclos. During her early years she led the free life of a gay Parisian. Later she became acknowledged leader of society and fashion. She radiated an irresistible personal fascination — both for men and women. At 70 she had the appearance of a mature beauty in her late twenties. Her skin was free from wrinkles, and her shoulders, bust and neck were of exceptional roundness and beauty. So beautiful was she at 90 that a young man (who knew her age) fell desperately in love with her. Her figure retained to the last the perfect contour and elasticity of a woman in her prime. Records prove she diligently pursued certain rules for the care of her body which coincide to-day with the findings of modern science.

The greatest cause of aging

The chief reason why we lose youth and beauty (grow old) is declared by Metchnikoff and other great scientists to be intestinal stasis (one form of which is constipation). Authorities (such as Foges and Kellogg) declare that 90% of all men and women over 25 are habitually constipated. (This explains why the average person begins to fail in health within less than 7 years after that time—at 31, according to U. S. Life Tables.)

Intestinal poisoning (brought on by constipation) causes headaches, irritability, blurred visions, despondency, dizziness and sleeplessness; also skin troubles destructive to beauty; wrinkles, yellow skin, dry or falling hair, and sallow complexion. Many cases of over or under weight are attributable to this cause. Intestinal poisoning also gives rise to a great variety of disease—including kidney trouble, bad tonsils, hardening of the arteries, abscessed teeth, abdominal cancer, and some 30 other dangerous conditions (according to Sir Arbuthnot Lane, physician to King George V).

This book will show you how to stay young

"The Lazy Colon" is a brief, authoritative presentation of what to do (and what not to do) in overcoming and preventing intestinal poisoning. This book contains the boiled down practical part of over 2000 technical works, medical and surgical reports, researches and discoveries made by over 300 physicians and scientists of international reputation. It is written in plain English—free from professional terminology.

The authors (Charles M. Campbell and Albert K. Detwiller, M. D.) have spent nearly 20 years in the study of this subject.

A thoughtful reading will materially change every mature person's outlook on life by showing that the bogy of middle age, if resolutely faced, can be driven forward into a receding future.

Some opinions of "The Lazy Colon"

Martin W. Barr, M. D., noted physician and author, says: "Sat up most of last night reading this delightful and masterly book."

Hon. Wm. R. Green, Ch'm. Ways and Means Committee of Congress: "This book might well be entitled 'How to Add 20 Years to Your Life.' Its outstanding feature, digesting in non-technical language researches of the most intelligent investigators in the world, is unique, interesting and very instructive in a field of wide spread ignorance.

Dr. Paul C. Phillips of Amherst College: "I shall use this book for collateral reading in my class of Hygiene."

Dr. John A. Neva, New York: "I have read your Lazy Colon with greatest delight. Every physician and layman should have one."

* * * * *

It is impossible to tell you here even a small part of the epoch-making information this book contains. Send $2.50 for it and examine it at your leisure. If you are not delighted with its sane, practical advice — return it and our check for its purchase price will be mailed to you immediately.

THE EDUCATIONAL PRESS, Dept. E-1
116-120 West 32nd St., N. Y. City

Enclosed find $2.50 for one copy of "The Lazy Colon." If not satisfied, I may return it in 10 days and get my money back.

Name .....

Address .....

ADVENTURE
Feb. 1st, 1927

Published twice a month by The Butterick Publishing Company, Butterick Building, New York, N. Y. Yearly subscription $4.00 in advance; single copy 25 cents. Entered as second-class matter Oct. 1, 1910, at the post-office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Additional entry at Brooklyn, New York.

Volume 61
Number 4

With the "Trouble-Shooters" of the North Atlantic

ICE-BERGS—towering, ponderous, *deadly* mountains of ice drift southward from the ice fields of the Arctic into the traffic lane of trans-Atlantic steamers.

Locating and destroying them is the perilous and never-ending duty of the United States Coast Guard cutters.

Shell fire and high explosives, however, often fail to blow the bergs from the sea, and warnings are then broadcasted by radio to every ship whose course lies through the danger zone.

Smooth power, unfailing dependability over long periods and under all conditions of service are qualities demanded in the radio batteries used in this dangerous naval service.

The fact that Burgess Batteries meet those requirements recommends them to you for your own receiving set.

Ask Any Radio Engineer

BURGESS BATTERY COMPANY
GENERAL SALES OFFICE: CHICAGO
Canadian Factories and Offices:
Niagara Falls and Winnipeg

BURGESS RADIO BATTERIES

I STOP Foot Pains

or you pay nothing

SLIP a new and amazing band on the most painful feet. Within 10 minutes every trace of pain has vanished. This band acts to strengthen and support the vital muscles whose weakened condition causes 94% of all foot troubles, medical authorities say. Wear stylish shoes again, walk and dance without a twinge.

No stiff props to further weaken the foot. This is a strong, super-elastic yet amazingly thin, light band. It's called the Jung Arch Brace and acts through correct tension and scientific design to strengthen muscles naturally. Soon you do without it—feet are well.

Test it 10 days. If not amazed and delighted your money returned. Go to druggist, shoe store or chiropodist. If they can't supply you use coupon below and pay postman. **Send for free book on foot and leg troubles.**

JUNG'S *"The "Original"* **ARCH BRACES**

FREE if it fails

Jung Arch Brace Co.,
342 Jung Bldg., Cincinnati, Ohio.
Send 1 pair ☐ Wonder Style, $1 and postage, ☐ Miracle Style (extra wide for severe cases), $1.50 and postage. ☐ Send free book.

Shoe Size..... Last.....
Name.....
Address.....
P. O.....State.....

Canada: Kirkham & Roberts, Pacific Bldg. Toronto.
Canadian prices: Wonder, $1.25; Miracle, $1.75

PISO'S

Conquer that Cough! For quick relief take PISO'S — a pleasant, effective syrup used for over 60 years. It soothes— but contains no opiates. 35c and 60c sizes.

for Coughs

In conjunction with PISO'S Syrup use PISO'S Throat and Chest Salve. This ointment, applied *externally*, quickly penetrates. 35c.

Learn Furcraft

Learn by mail, evenings at home, to Renew, Repair and Make-up all kinds of fur garments. Learn glazing, ironing and storage. Big demand, big need for your service in every neighborhood. $3 an hour in your spare time or a real business now and a fur shop later. We teach you secret processes. Earnings start in 30 days. Uncrowded field for men and women. FREE BOOK Send now for free book giving details. No obligation.
NORTHWESTERN FUR COMPANY
1402 Sunderland Building, Omaha, Nebr.

Show Card Lettering

Learn at Home

HERE is the very course you need if you want to get a good paying position as a Show Card Letterer or Sign Letterer, or have a business of your own. This course is complete and practical and especially arranged to meet the needs of the student who studies at home. It was written by E. L. Koller, Principal of the School of Art of the International Correspondence Schools, member of the American Federation of Arts, and The National Society of Craftsmen.

Mr. Koller has had twenty years' teaching experience, and his success in helping other men and women is an indication of what he can do for you.

H. L. Wood, a clerk, made more than $700 "on the side" before he had completed his course and also won $125 in prizes. Harry William Lord writes that he has more than doubled his salary as a result of studying this I. C. S. course in spare time. William Whitman, a former wagon builder, now has a sign painting business of his own and is earning *nearly three times* as much as he did before enrolling with the International Correspondence Schools.

There is no doubt that Show Card Lettering and Sign Lettering offer a real opportunity to ambitious men and women. Just mark and mail the coupon and we'll gladly send you a booklet telling all about the I. C. S. course in Show Card Lettering, or any other subject in which you are interested.

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS
Box 2039-E, Scranton, Penna.

Without cost or obligation on my part, please tell me how I can qualify for the position or in the subject before which I have marked an X:

☐ SHOW CARD LETTERING
☐ ILLUSTRATING ☐ CARTOONING

☐ Business Management	☐ Salesmanship
☐ Industrial Management	☐ Advertising
☐ Personnel Organization	☐ Better Letters
☐ Traffic Management	☐ French ☐ Spanish
☐ Business Law	☐ Stenography and Typing
☐ Banking and Banking Law	☐ Business English
☐ Accountancy (including C.P.A.)	☐ Civil Service
☐ Nicholson Cost Accounting	☐ Railway Mail Clerk
☐ Bookkeeping	☐ Common School Subjects
☐ Private Secretary	☐ High School Subjects

TECHNICAL AND INDUSTRIAL COURSES

☐ Electrical Engineering	☐ Architect
☐ Electric Lighting	☐ Architects' Blueprints
☐ Mechanical Engineer	☐ Contractor and Builder
☐ Mechanical Draftsman	☐ Architectural Draftsman
☐ Machine Shop Practice	☐ Concrete Builder
☐ Railroad Positions	☐ Structural Engineer
☐ Gas Engine Operating	☐ Chemistry ☐ Pharmacy
☐ Civil Engineer	☐ Automobile Work
☐ Surveying and Mapping	☐ Airplane Engines
☐ Metallurgy ☐ Mining	☐ Agriculture and Poultry
☐ Steam Engineering ☐ Radio	☐ Mathematics

Name.....

Street
Address.....

City..... State.....

Canadians may send this coupon to International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Limited, Montreal, Canada

WHAT I THINK OF PELMANISM - By Judge Ben B. Lindsey

PELMANISM is a big, vital, significant contribution to the mental life of America. I have the deep conviction that it is going to strike at the very roots of individual failure, for I see in it a new power, a great driving force.

I first heard of Pelmanism while in England on war work. Sooner or later almost every conversation touched on it, for the movement seemed to have the sweep of a religious conviction. Even in France I did not escape the word, for thousands of officers and men were *Pelmanizing* in order to fit themselves for return to civil life.

When I learned that Pelmanism had been brought to America by Americans for Americans, I was among the first to enroll. My reasons were two: first, because I have always felt that every mind needed regular, systematic, and scientific exercise, and, secondly, because I wanted to find out if Pelmanism was the thing that I could recommend to the hundreds who continually ask my advice in relation to their lives, problems, and ambitions.

In the twenty years that I have sat on the bench of the Juvenile Court of Denver, almost every variety of human failure has passed before me in melancholy procession. By *failure* I do not mean the merely criminal mistakes of the individual, but the faults of training that keep a life from full development and complete expression.

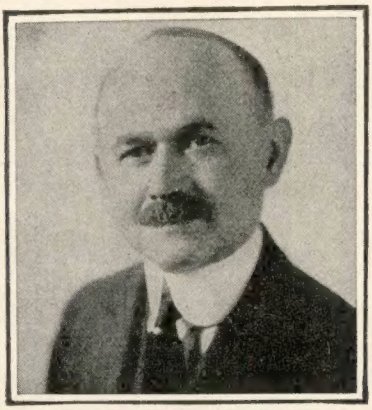
Pelmanism the Answer

If I were asked to set down the principal cause of the average failure I would have to put the blame at the door of our educational system. It is there that trouble begins—trouble that only the gifted and most fortunate are strong enough to overcome in later life.

What wonder that our boys and girls come forth into the world with something less than firm purpose, full confidence and leaping courage? What wonder that mind wandering and wool gathering are common, and that so many individuals are shackled by indecisions, doubts, and fears?

It is to these needs and these lacks that Pelmanism comes as an answer. The "twelve little gray books" are a remarkable achievement. Not only do they contain the discoveries that science knows about the mind and its working, but the treatment is so simple that the truths may be grasped by anyone of average education.

In plain words, what Pelmanism has done is to take psychology out of the college and put it into harness for the day's work. It lifts great, helpful truths out of the back water and plants them in the living stream.



JUDGE BEN B. LINDSEY

Judge Ben B. Lindsey is known throughout the whole modern world for his work in the Juvenile Court of Denver. Years ago his vision and courage lifted children out of the cruelties and stupidities of the criminal law, and forced society to recognize its duties and responsibilities in connection with the "citizens of tomorrow."

As a matter of fact, Pelmanism ought to be the beginning of education instead of a remedy for its faults. First of all, it teaches the science of self-realization; it makes the student *discover* himself; it acquaints him with his sleeping powers and shows him how to develop them. The method is *exercise*, not of the haphazard sort, but a steady, increasing kind that brings each hidden power to full strength without strain or break.

Pelmanism's Large Returns

The human mind is *not* an automatic device. It will *not* "take care of itself." Will-power, originality, decision, resourcefulness, imagination, initiative, courage—these things are not gifts but results. Every one of these qualities can be developed by effort just as muscles can be developed by exercise. I do not mean by this that the individual can add to the brains that God gave him, but he can learn to make use of the brains that he has instead of letting them fall into flabbiness through disuse.

Other methods and systems that I have examined, while realizing the value of mental exercise, have made the mistake of limiting their efforts to the development of some single sense. What Pelmanism does is to consider the mind as a whole and treat it as a whole. It goes in for mental team play, training the mind as a unity.

Its big value, however, is the instructional note. Each lesson is accompanied by a work sheet that is really a progress sheet. The student goes forward under a teacher in the sense that he is followed through from first to last, helped, guided, and encouraged at every turn by conscientious experts.

Pelmanism is no miracle. It calls for application. But I know of nothing that pays larger returns on an investment of one's spare time from day to day.

(*Signed*) Ben B. Lindsey.

Note: As Judge Lindsey has pointed out, Pelmanism is neither an experiment nor a theory. For almost a quarter of a century it has been showing men and women how to lead happy, successful, well-rounded lives. 550,000 Pelmanists in every country on the globe are the guarantee of what Pelman training can do for *you*.

No matter what your own particular difficulties are — poor memory, mind wandering, indecision, timidity, nervousness, or lack of personality—Pelmanism will show you the way to correct and overcome them. And on the positive side, it will uncover and develop qualities which you never dreamed existed in you. It will be of direct, tangible value to you in your business and social life. In the files at the Pelman Institute of America are hundreds of letters from successful Pelmanists telling how they doubled, trebled and even quadrupled their salaries, thanks to Pelman training.

How to Become a Pelmanist

"Scientific Mind Training" is the name of the absorbingly interesting booklet which tells about Pelmanism in detail. It is fascinating in itself with its wealth of original thought and clear observation. "Scientific Mind Training" makes an interesting addition to your library.

Your copy is waiting for you. It is absolutely free. Simply fill out the coupon and mail it today. It costs you nothing, it obligates you to nothing, but it is absolutely sure to show you the way to success and happiness. Don't put it off and then forget about it. Don't miss a big opportunity. MAIL THE COUPON NOW.

THE PELMAN INSTITUTE OF AMERICA

Approved as a correspondence school under the laws of the State of New York

Suite 1592, 19 West 44th St., N. Y. City.

THE PELMAN INSTITUTE OF AMERICA
Suite 1592, 19 West 44th St., New York

Please send me without obligation your free booklet, "Scientific Mind Training"

Name .....

Address .....

City.....State .....

1927

VOL. LXI. NO. 4

Adventure

(Registered U. S. Patent Office)

Issue of February 1

ARTHUR SULLIVANT HOFFMAN, *Editor*

Contents:

The Covenant of the Craddocks, *A Short Story* ALBERT RICHARD WETJEN 2
Sea—What it expects in a man.

MacGinty's Brother, *A Short Story* . . . . W. TOWNEND 14
San Francisco—Everybody knew him.

Sunset, *A Short Story* . . . . . SIDNEY HERSCHEL SMALL 25
Japan—At the stroke of the gong.

Old . . . . . EDGAR MIMS SIVELY 37

The Boy John Jewitt, *An Article* . . . . . AGNES C. LAUT 38
Vancouver Island—The great Tyee adopts a son.

Come You Home a Hero, *A Short Story* . EDWARD SHENTON 61
World War—One man's glory.

Air-Sized, *A Short Story* . . . . . ANDREW A. CAFFREY 64
Aviation—Bigger than brain and brawn.

Painted Ponies, *A Four-Part Story. Part III* . ALAN LEMAY 76
West—Drums of war.

Salt, *A Complete Novelette* . . . . . ARTHUR O. FRIEL 114
Orinoco Country—*Sixto Scott* tells of the devil-horseman.

The Fighting Years, *A Six-Part Story. Part IV* HUGH PENDEXTER 157
America—The Thunderers aid the captives.

Looking About, 189 The Camp-Fire, 191 Ask Adventure, 196

Straight Goods, 205 Old Songs That Men Have Sung, 204

Adventure's Travel Association, 202 Books You Can Believe, 205

Lost Trails, 205 Trail Ahead, 206

Decorations in this issue are by ROCKWELL KENT

Published twice a month by The Butterick Publishing Company, Butterick Building, New York, N. Y., U. S. A. Joseph A. Moore, Chairman of the Board; S. R. Latshaw, President; Levin Rank, Secretary and Treasurer; Arthur Sullivant Hoffman, Editor.

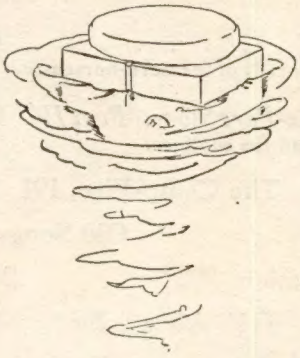
Entered as Second Class Matter, October 1, 1910, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Additional entry at Brooklyn, New York. Yearly subscription $4.00 in advance. Single Copy, Twenty-five Cents. Foreign postage, $2.00 additional. Canadian postage, 75 cents. Trade Mark Registered: Copyright, 1927, by The Butterick Publishing Company in the United States and Great Britain. Entered at Stationers' Hall, London, England.

"You can't keep a good soap down!" *

THIS is a libelous portrait of a man of our acquaintance whose wife (gentle economist) tantalized him by the promise of Ivory for his bath—*as soon as he had used up his cake of sinker-soap!*

Unwilling to do further submarine searching for his leaden but elusive soap globule, yet loath to cross his smiling wife's wishes, our friend proceeded as follows:

1. Borrowed a cake of Ivory from his daughter.
2. Cemented sinker-soap to Ivory cake.
3. Placed the ill-mated pair in bath water, and proved Ivory a life-saver, as shown.



"It Floats"

At the present writing, the wedded soaps are wafer-thin—the sinker-soap from dissolution, the Ivory from lather-giving generosity; and thus one man has demonstrated the falsity of the adage that "you cannot eat your cake and have it, too."

PROCTER & GAMBLE

*In using this headline, we bow acknowledgment to hundreds of correspondents from coast to coast.

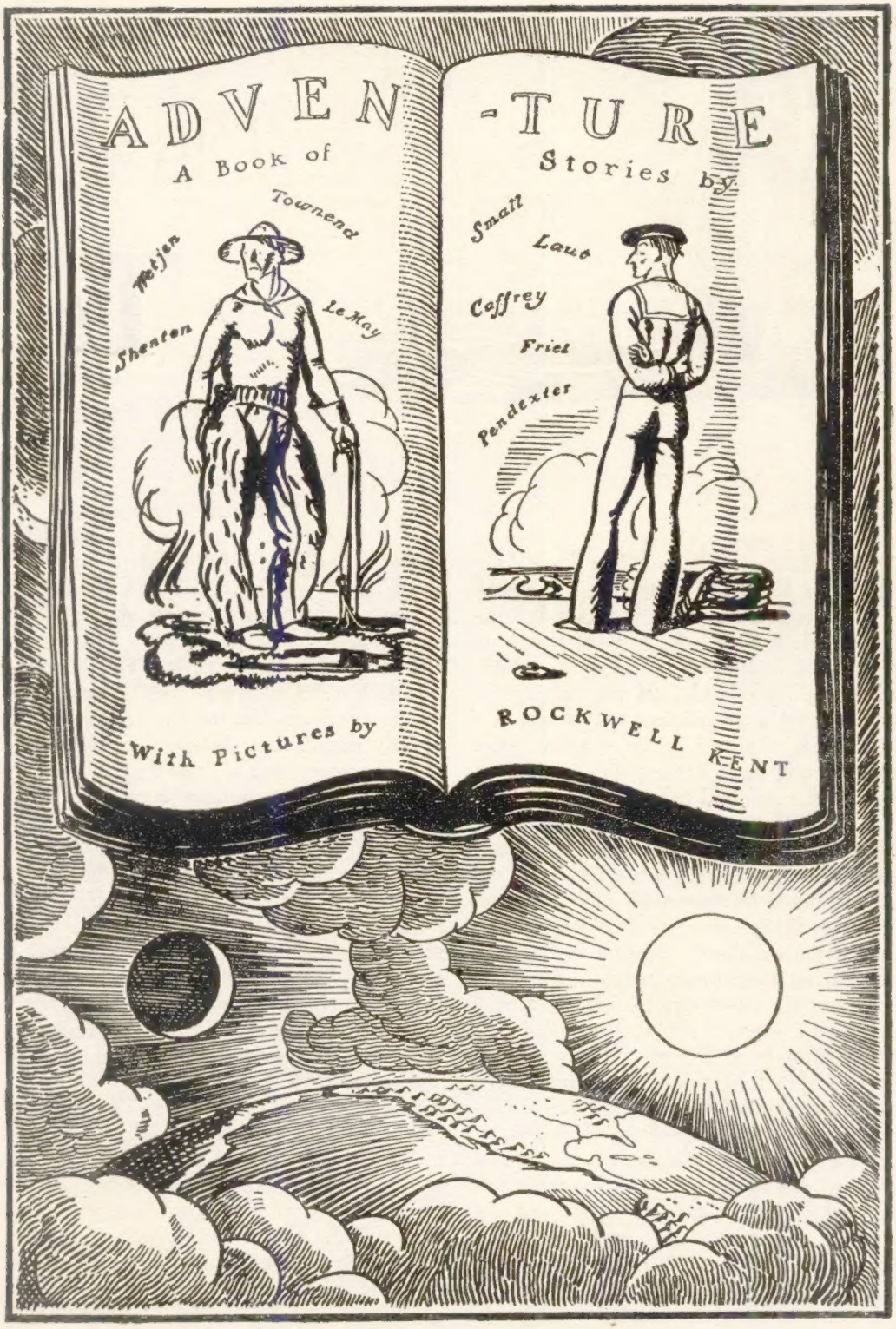
IVORY SOAP

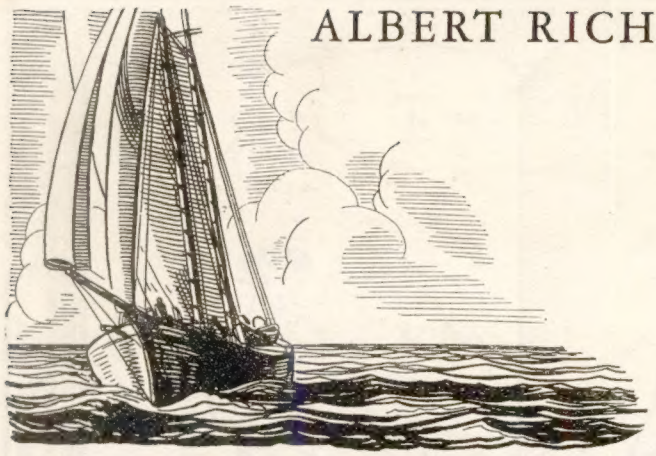
99 44/100 % Pure

Luxury and economy are wedded in Guest Ivory—for wives who treasure their complexions. Guest Ivory costs only 5 cents because so many women won't use anything else.

© 1927, P. & G. Co.

Advertising section continued in rear of book


ADVEN -TURE
A Book of Stories by
Townend
Wetjen
Shenton
Le May
Small
Laut
Caffrey
Friel
Pendexter
With Pictures by ROCKWELL KENT



ALBERT RICHARD WETJEN

Tells *of* The

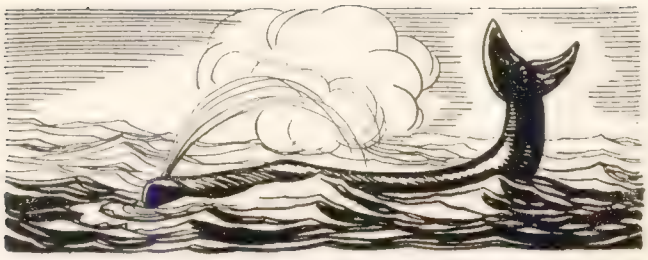
HER name was the *Prince Shan*, done in letters of gilt with scrollwork on her bows. She was a beautifully built four-masted schooner, not as spendid to look upon as one of the white-winged ships of old, but with a certain dignity and a stateliness that could not be denied. She had an air of aloofness, a sort of cool, calm atmosphere, as if with her master she had taken on some of his qualities. He was a Craddock, one of the New Bedford Craddocks that trace back to Devonshire and antecede Drake. Like all the breed he was small and dark and neat, in this generation clean-shaven. The Craddocks were reputed to have no nerves, as they were reputed never to have lost their temper. Neither had they ever lost a ship.

The annals of the sea, which are the kernels of history, take note of many curious incidents befalling a Craddock's vessel, yet never had one of the name left his craft by reef or sandbar or along the iron coast of strange lands. It was rather uncanny but it was fact. It was almost legendary. In an old book—so it was said—there was written that the first sailor of all the Craddocks had made covenant with the sea that he and his seed should serve ships and deep water forever, from cradle to grave, with full loyalty and love, heart, hand and head, without doubt or falter; and in return the sea should render them right of all ocean, wind, wave and tide, and should shelter their bones at the last. Certain it was through all the generations that the Craddocks went quietly about their business, which was the sea, prospered a little and did their duty with rather more success than the average mariner enjoys.

For the present Craddock the *Prince Shan* was his first command. The braid was new on his cuffs, yet he walked the poop calmly, entirely at ease, as the schooner went across the bar at Astoria and started on her long run from Portland to Tokio with lumber and general cargo.

It was a clean and airy day. The sea laughed and ran lazily under the spring sun, rendering spume to the wind that walked between the crests. The canvas swelled to the moving air and every rope and line lifted the old Song of the Trade while about the schooner's bows there grew the misty arc of a rainbow, growing and dying, dying and growing as she lunged across the sea and the green hills of the land faded into the sun-shimmer astern.

"She's logging around ten, sir," said



Covenant of THE Craddocks

the mate, very pleased, and the captain turned and looked almost through him as if not actually aware of his physical presence.

"Of course," he murmured absently, and the mate shrugged and sighed as he moved away.

It had always been like that when the captain was only a mate himself. Nothing disturbed him. He seemed to take for granted mysterious things to which other men could not grow accustomed—strong winds and fair where calms had always before been encountered, lucky warnings when reefs and bars were approached too closely, mere wild gales when typhoons and hurricanes walked abroad and sent other ships to destruction.

"Of course," Craddock would answer, as if he would have been surprized at anything else, as if he were in communion with forces of which others had no knowledge. It was profoundly irritating to other men whose forebears had made no mysterious covenant and who did not possess the iron, unflinching faith that makes for great command and the accomplishment of impossible things.

Captain Craddock walked his poop alone this morning—the breed was always reserved—and watched his men washing the port grime from the decks. From the galley pans clanged and occasionally some one swore. The wet decks began to steam as the sun gained heat. Some one laughed at his work. The peace of the sea had descended. Captain Craddock drew deep breaths of the wine-like air and hoped that he would prove true to his race and tradition. A splendid ship, his ship, his very first. The memory of the land was like a vaguely disconcerting dream. The Craddocks always felt more at home on deep water. He laughed softly and was contented, as sure and confident as any man of twenty years' standing, just as if the braid on his cuff were not new and his pulses not fluttering with the hot pride of command.

The sun set and rose again. The windy, free days slipped by and the rainbow was steady at the *Prince Shan's* bow.

And then the wind left the schooner, died away in fitful gusts and rendered her to the deep heaving of the calm. It grew terrifically hot. The very pitch in the seams lifted and bubbled. The canvas slatted and the booms swung. The hours dragged and the days seemed endless. The monotony fretted men's nerves. The mate, watching the growing irritation, increased the work for each watch to do.

There were occasional fights in the forecastle, complaints about the food and the numerous cockroaches.

Captain Craddock walked his poop unmoved, tranquilly sure of himself and his ship. He sent for'ard lime-juice as a preventive against scurvy. He ordered the men's diet varied somewhat, sent to them many cans of insect powder. Practical things. He had no personal interest in the men but they were essential to his ship and it was a canon of good navigation that they be kept fit and obedient.

The calm persisted. Captain Craddock looked often at the glass. He was not disturbed or worried, only a little regretful that his voyage should be delayed. He slept fitfully, waking often because of the heat and listening for the musical ripple of water along the hull, to sigh and fall asleep again when no such sound reached his ears. He drew himself then into a sort of vast patience and his firm lips drew into a little twist as if other men's unrest amused him slightly.

One thick, warm night, with hot little gusts of air coming fitfully across the glassy swells to stiffen the sails, to move the schooner a few fathoms and then desert her again, the mate came to the captain as he sat below entering up his private log.

"Will you come 'midships, sir," he said in a voice slightly shaken.

Captain Craddock regarded him patiently and with uplifted brows.

" 'Midships?"

"The main hatch, sir. There's smoke."

The captain smiled faintly. His pulses fluttered, but that was a mere bracing of the spirit before the promise of action.

"Smoke?" he murmured, and rose to his feet.

"Smoke, sir," insisted the mate.

The captain wiped his lightly perspiring hands with his handkerchief. He made a note of the time, jotted it down in the log and pushed the book away. Then he followed the mate on deck.

The watch stood around the main hatch talking in low tones that fell silent as the captain approached. The men moved their feet in an embarrassed way and their faces looked ghostly pale through the darkness, disembodied sort of things floating above black shapeless bodies.

"It's pretty strong, sir," observed the boatswain, uneasy because of the thick silence. The captain nodded but stood still and looked at the hatch where a corner of the tarpaulin had been flung back. Even from where he stood he could catch a whiff of acrid fumes. He bent over the little opening at last and coughed involuntarily, putting his handkerchief to his lips. When he straightened he brushed his jacket, although he could not see if dirt or a wrinkle had appeared on the cloth. His voice was entirely calm and patient. He might have been ordering his dinner.

"Get the hatches off, men. We'll try and locate it. Break out some of the cargo if you can. Start the hoses. Call all hands. Get some lanterns on deck, bosun."

He appeared so indifferent that one of the men laughed nervously and others followed suit. There was a general movement, a hitching up of belts, a lightening of the spirits. The boatswain spat into the scuppers and took a fresh chew from a gnawed plug. He muttered something and the men separated, some of them grasping the tarpaulin and pulling it clear of the hatch.

The captain turned and walked slowly aft. He mounted the poop companion and stood still and silent for a while by the main cabin scuttle, his eyes scanning the dark swells that lifted and sank beyond the ship. His lips were firm and a little hard muscle stirred and slid at each side of his jaw. His eyes brooded somberly on the sea of his fathers and he wondered whether, now that the test had come, he would prove worthy. Then he braced his shoulders with a quick little motion, his lips relaxed, the muscles each side of his jaw disappeared and there came to him, as by right, the iron, superbly unyielding spirit of his race to which disaster was a word unknown and

failure something that simply didn't occur. He laughed softly and went down to the main cabin.

DAWN found a mushroom of smoke lifting from the *Prince Shan's* midship deck. The hot, infrequent gusts of the night had gone and the mushroom rose steadily and evenly from the main hatch, to break and waver as the ship rolled but to form inexorably again. Enveloping the mushroom, like an enormous pall spread far over the ship and the sea, was a light yellow haze that made the sun rays quiver and seem a sickly orange and blurred the sparkle from the long green swells.

Near the break of the poop men moved up and down at the pumps from which led wet rounds of hose, pulsing as if with life each time the pump handles came down. In the smoke itself men loomed, wavered and disappeared at work. There were chemicals below and something was happening to them, judging from the fumes that made the throat contract and the eyes run. A few minutes of such fumes was enough to drive a man sick and shaking to his knees. A few more minutes sent him unconscious to the deck. Already the cook and a seaman had been carried aft to lie on mattresses and recover.

Captain Craddock watched the scene from his vantage point near the forward poop taffrail. He remained a neat and tranquil figure. He had taken the time to wash and shave and change his linen, as on any normal morning. He gave his orders, when occasion arose, without haste or any change in his quiet voice. The men, sweating and breathing hard at their work, would take a strange fresh courage at the sight of him so cool and collected above them, though they could not tell why they should.

The sun swept upward through the sky and a faint breeze grew from the southeast, sending the mushroom of smoke and the yellow haze sprawling along the forward deck and over the schooner's bows. The ship began to twist somewhat in her rolling.

The captain walked aft, commandeered a seaman and sent him to the wheel. He worked out a careful course, trimmed ship and ran before the stiffening wind. He returned to the taffrail then to watch, like a god looking down upon his world, weighing and judging all things; above fear and excitement, joy and despair, apparently without emotion. No man knew the keen anxiety gnawing within him. Such things must not be shown. That was one of the penalties of command.

By noon the mushroom of smoke had subsided to a mere thread of vapor and the gases from the chemicals were not so strong. The wind was blowing steadily and the spirits of the tired men were soothed. They ate a hot meal and one watch went below to get some sleep. The other watch pumped an hour or so longer and the thread of vapor gradually died away. The captain walked to the poop companion with the intention of going down and starting the men to breaking out cargo, when the second mate touched his arm and said—

"Glass's dropping, sir."

"Thank you," said the captain and he turned from the companion and went into the little chart-house the schooner carried abaft the main cabin scuttle. The glass was low and dropping lower. The captain nodded to himself and the little muscles appeared each side of his jaw again. He glanced at the chart and wiped his palms that were perspiring slightly. Anxiety gnawed at him but he fought it down and kept his face unchanged. He must have no doubt, no faltering of faith. So ran the old covenant, and whether the tale was true or not he knew his forebears had gone serenely through their duty because they did not doubt their ship or themselves and kept the faith with the sea, which is unfaltering vigilance and truth of plank and spar and salt-water lore.

He went on deck, without haste, smiling a little.

"Get the canvas off her," he said. "And everything battened down."

The mate, who had seen the glass and was standing worriedly amidships, sprang

to life with string of oaths and blows, and the tired men went to work. The watch sent below to sleep stumbled on deck again, sullen and dazed and a little stupefied. The captain paced back and forth and watched the sudden vague mist growing on the far horizon, blotting out the sky, growing darker, turning to a leaden hue.

But the blow held off for many hours, hung suspended as it were, a sort of ominous shadow of force over the rim of the world, more felt than seen, more apparent in the uneasy muttering of the swells that began to break white and short than in the look of the lowering sky.

By the time dark fell, however, the sea had risen to long, vicious breakers, kept down somewhat by the force of the wind but sending aboard sheets of warm spume that were hard to face. The *Prince Shan*, heavy with the water that had been pumped into her to quell the fire, sagged badly, yawed, and twice within an hour was swept by towering dull-green masses of water. Her hull quivered and shook and her scuppers spouted foam, foam shot with phosphorescent lights that seemed like live things.

Captain Craddock stood in his streaming oilskins in the lee of the chart-house with the mate and the second, and watched, apparently undisturbed, the progress of the storm.

It was an incoherent roaring chaos, a thing of thick, driving spume and screaming wind that took the breath. The sea-fires ran along the swells as they loomed out of the darkness and sank back again. The *Prince Shan* writhed and shivered and twisted as if a giant hand was pursuing her below the waves and she strove frantically to escape. It was during a wild yaw caused by her partially waterlogged condition that she was pooped. A giant breaker outstripped the racing ship and topped her stern with a thunderous roaring that numbed the very senses of already dazed men. The two men at the wheel were licked away like straws and sent helplessly to the very forward taffrail, The captain and the mates mingled with each other and jarred in a knot at the head of the port companion. The sailmaker, who was just ascending to the poop, went overside on a sleek boil of foam, screaming in a thin, piping voice that somehow pierced the roaring. All this in the thick dark, riven with shimmers of white and sudden sea-fires so that no man saw.

The *Prince Shan* staggered, sank in the trough as if she intended to go down, and then, rising like a cork, shook the water from her decks so that it roared in cataracts and smaller waves about her masts and houses. She staggered again, quivered as if from some shrewd and secret blow, and swung broadside to the sea, wallowing in the trough. The next breaker swept her starboard to port, breached her clean and sent her on her beam ends so that everything movable and a great deal that supposedly was not went to leeward with a crash.

There was a period of quiet, a lull almost, though that was caused because the reeling hull shut off temporarily the scream of the wind and spume. The *Prince Shan* remained on one side for ages. It seemed as if she never intended to recover her even keel again. She hung suspended, as it were, her safety to be determined by a hair's breadth either way. An extra gust of wind—an extra drop of water, it seemed—and she would roll right over. Had another sea struck her then she would unquestionably have gone.

From the port companion-head where he had been washed Captain Craddock fought to his feet, choking and spitting salt water. He clawed and fought a tremendous way up a slanting, slippery deck toward the wheel, almost without volition, only half-conscious of what he was doing, as an animal by instinct dies fighting. He reached the madly kicking spokes after what seemed an eternity. They bruised and bloodied him some more before he steadied them. He stood straining against the thrust of the rudder, facing into the utter dark, his ship on her beam ends, no man near him,

and a dying cyclone roaring by his ears.

There was scarcely a chance in a thousand the *Prince Shan* would lift before she was breached again and Captain Craddock's face was ashen and the little muscles were set and hard each side of his jaw. Yet he must not doubt, must not falter. He belonged to the sea, the sea was his and only she could help him in this moment. Brain, heart and sinew had done what they could. He faced it unflinching, his shoulders braced, and the grim, calm patience of his kind coming to uphold him. And she lifted, lifted wearily and slowly and with a terrifying list remaining, but lifted enough to ride the next sea that barely foamed along her scuppers.

She swung before the wind, and Captain Craddock laughed as his sea drove stinging spume across his face.

Came the helmsman, bruised and bloody, clawing up to the wheel, taking the spokes into his hands and cursing thickly. The captain spoke quiet reassuring words and left him to fight the spokes while he went forward to find the second mate and tell him to try to get the smallest rag of canvas raised. The mate, rocking upright, his head split open and blood running down his face, collided with the captain in the lee of the chart-house.

"She should have gone!" the mate roared, gasping and clutching the captain's arm. "This's the luckiest bloody ship I ever sailed! By God!"

"Of course," shouted the captain above the noise, and he laughed again and went on to the companion. But the second mate had gathered men on his own initiative and was driving them to work. There was no further mishap during the night.

The dawn came thin and wan and gray, and the sea moved monstrously across the world, angry white on the crests and dull leaden and black in the hollows. But the storm was going down and the sun was trying to struggle through the misty sky. The wind was a mere hard gale and the *Prince Shan* was not laboring as heavily as she had. Captain Craddock was on the poop surveying his ruined main deck, a welter of loose rope ends and splinters from the galley-house and a stretch of the starboard rail. Of the galley-house there was no sign. It had gone with the cook, his pans and pots and his stove, vanished utterly away.

The captain went down to the weary men. One was fumbling with matches, trying to start a fire in a bucket punched full of holes so that he could heat coffee and perhaps fry some salt pork and biscuit. Two other man were aloft clearing raveled gear and others were throwing the rubbish off the deck. The captain talked to them, quietly, cheerfully, quite as though there had been no storm and fire and they were clearing the port grime away that the stevedores had left. The second mate joined the captain. He was a stocky, sturdy and efficient young man and his gray eyes were somber as he surveyed the ship.

"Lucky t' get off light as we did," he commented at last.

The captain smiled faintly and said, "Of course," in his absent way. The second mate muttered and wondered whether nothing would move this man into an expression of rage or pleasure. He started to add, "Well, the men'll want some sleep, sir," when there was a thunderous knocking roar that deafened him.

'Midship a red eye glowed and disappeared. A huge gout of smoke shot up, spread and for a moment covered the ship before the wind could rip it away. The captain staggered and the second mate fell on one knee and with quick horror put an arm over his eyes. Then fragments began to dapple to sea, began to patter and thud on the deck. A hatch, split endways, slammed on the poop, sending a shower of hot charred splinters through the air. One ripped the captain's cheek so that he instinctively clapped a hand to the wound and looked surprized to find blood on his fingers. Two splinters buried themselves in the second mate's back and he jerked to his feet with a cry of pain. A block smashed on the after hatch and then a piece of broken batten whizzed

down, flicked the captain just above the left ear, and dropped him without a groan to the deck so that he rolled on his back and was still.

The second mate cried—

"Well, now! Well, now!"

He stared stupidly at the white face against the wet planking, and swore shakily, fumbled with his own wounds. Then he choked—

"Main hatch, by God! Blown to ——! —— fire wasn't out!"

He started running then to where the mate was braced back against the rail staring with popping eyes at the belching smoke even as he yelled for men to come to him. The captain lay injured, perhaps dead, but the ship came first. Flame shot up and wavered. Some of the rigging began to steam.

WHEN Captain Craddock came to his senses he found himself on the bottom boards of a ship's boat, his back and head resting against some one's knees, and many men watching him. He stirred and tried to lick his dry lips and some one held a dipper of lukewarm water to them.

He shook his head, forcing it to clear. He remembered things, his ship, the storm, the fire, the explosion. Life flooded in his veins, called up from some mysterious reserve of energy as he automatically took up again the strain of command. He sat up straight and after a moment's giddiness looked around. He was resting against the boatswain's knees and the boatswain was holding the boat's tiller.

"What is this?" he asked weakly.

The boatswain rubbed a knotted hand up and down one thigh and attempted a grin.

"You been 'elpless since yesterday morning, sir, an' th' ship's 'bout done. We thought we'd best get away. We jest pulled clear."

A slow astonishment grew in the captain as the words sank home. Why, he was a Craddock. He couldn't leave his ship. He stared over the slow, heaving swells and saw the *Prince Shan*, with black smoke still oozing from her, down by the bows so that the water washed her forward scuppers and her stern squattered solidly every time she sank into the trough. She was flat aback and her booms were swinging crazily.

"We tried t' get th' fire under control, sir," the boatswain was explaining. "But 'taint no use. She's got s' much water in 'er now she's ready t' founder."

"Where's the mate?" said the captain gently, struggling to his feet despite warning cries from alarmed men as the boat rocked. The boatswain grinned sheepishly.

"Th' mate's been flopped out pretty near as long as you was. The second didn't wanta come along so we sorta jest took him." He jerked a tar-stained thumb downward and the captain saw the mate lying still and white with a bandaged head on the bottom boards. Near him was the second mate with a big blue bruise on his forehead where something heavy had struck him.

"You're mutineers," said the captain, smiling faintly. "Put this boat about."

"It ain't safe, sir," the boatswain said uncomfortably. "She's 'ad a coupla small explosions since you wus hurt. She'll founder next blow. We gotta chance t' make land, an' we can't work much longer anyways without sleep."

"Put about," repeated the captain patiently. He was a little regretful that they couldn't understand he was a Craddock and must not leave his ship. He turned and estimated the distance to the schooner. A little over a mile perhaps. A long swim for a weak man. But luckily the sea was calm and the wind gentle and cool.

Men cried out, supporting the boatswain. They were half-dead with fatigue. If they ever got enough water in the ship to put out the fire she'd founder. She was foundering now for that matter. They'd worked hard enough to save her. They wouldn't go back. They were tired, disheartened men.

The captain sighed. He was in no position to use force. He stripped off his

jacket, calmly, deliberately, and stood in his singlet, serge pants and canvas shoes. The men watched him, falling silent.

The boatswain said at last, in an awed voice—

"You're going back, sir?"

"Of course," said the captain, vaguely astonished at the question.

The men cried out again. He was crazy. A dozen hands went to stop him but he plunged overside and reappeared swimming slowly toward the schooner.

For a moment the boat was chaos. Some wanted to pull after him and pick him up. Others said to let him go. He was crazy anyway and it would be one less to share the water. The boatswain agreed at last but stood up and hurled a life-belt after the swimming man. The splash made the captain turn his head. He saw the floating belt, stopped long enough to secure it, waved acknowledgment and thanks, and then resumed his swimming. A brief discussion, and the boat started to crawl slowly to the westward.

The captain had gone perhaps a hundred yards when his strength began to fail. The first spasm of his nervous energy expended, he stopped swimming and rested on the life-belt, putting it on after some difficulty and with many contortions. He floated exhausted, stirring only when a wind-crinkle in the water slapped against his face. He was extremely weak. He must have lost some blood. The boatswain had said he had been unconscious since the previous day, which meant he had been without food for longer than that.

He swam again, gritting his teeth. He had no doubt that he would reach the schooner. It was unthinkable that he shouldn't. He knew no fear. The colossal confidence of the Craddocks indeed may have been the germ from which grew that tale of the old book where it was written—so it was said—that the first of the family had made covenant with the sea.

It was perhaps three hours later, when the sun was on the very rim of the world, before the captain's tired hands touched the *Prince Shan's* hull and he pulled himself with a last effort over the forward rail that was almost submerged when the ship gave a long and lazy plunge. He half-rolled and was half-washed to the foremast and rested there a while, continuing on hands and knees to where the deck was scarred near the main hatch. He coughed in the fumes but crept on until he was clear of them.

The life-belt was in his way now, a sodden thing that seemed as heavy as a jacket of iron. He tried to get it off but his hasty knots, tied in the water, he could not undo. He crept up the port companion to the poop, rested against the main cabin scuttle and then with a feeling of relief half-slipped, half-fell below. He huddled on the water-stained rug at the companion foot until strength returned for him to rise. He got up then and reached the locker where the whisky was kept. There was a bottle within, secure in its rack, and he drew the cork with his teeth and drank slowly.

The spirit gave him new heart. He stood upright and walked uncertainly to the desk against the starboard bulkhead, and cut free his life-belt with the razor-edged Malay kris that was normally used as a paper-weight.

He dropped to the swivel chair before the desk and relaxed all of his aching, tired body, vaguely annoyed because one of the cabin doors was loose and banging back and forth, rattling its brass ring-handle every time the ship rolled. The first thing he must do was to eat and drink to keep up his strength. He could decide what came next later.

He rose at last and stumbled to the lazaret and found beef cubes, oatmeal biscuits and some tea. He fortified himself with more whisky and then made a simple meal over the primus stove kept in the little pantry right abaft the main cabin. He ate without zest, an ashen-faced, drawn figure of a weary, injured man, blood and drying salt on his face and clothes, unshaven and unwashed, alone at his own great table. His eyes were tired somber things that stared into vacancy.

When he had finished eating he stared vaguely at the bulkhead before him and wondered why he had come back. What could he do on a slowly foundering ship, alone, tired and weak as he was? Was this the friendliness of the sea, the sea his fathers had served all their lives? To break him and his ship and cast them crippled and alone together into the desolate vastness of an immense ocean?

Deep within him something stirred in protest. Something fluttered and tried to surge in his veins, forcing him to calmness, forcing him to have done with doubt and to regain the simple faith of a sailor in his ship and himself. But he was too tired, too exhausted. The very last of his strength had been used up in the terrible swim from the boat. He felt he didn't care at all. He should have gone with the men, to safety and sleep.

Still, he was a Craddock—yes, a Craddock. Without doubt or falter, heart, hand and head. So ran the covenant. He laughed and even as his head dropped in sleep a flash of the old calm and tranquil light came to his blurred eyes—

"SHE'S in a bad way. No doubt about it," said a voice.

The captain lifted his head, mildly surprized. A man was walking briskly round the main cabin, opening the doors and peering into the smaller cabins that led from it. When he came to the one that had the loose door, slamming and rattling back and forth, he methodically fastened it back by the brass hook so that the noise ceased.

"Yes," answered the captain, "I suppose she is."

The stranger nodded pleasantly and dropped to a chair across the table. He was about the same height as the captain and had the same eyes, but he wore a neat pointed beard and mustaches and bore a scar across his forehead.

"I doubt I've seen a vessel so badly off," the stranger went on affably.

"Cyclone and a fire," the captain explained. It all seemed very usual but he did wonder who the stranger was. "My crew deserted. What ship was yours?"

"Oh, the *Travancore.* I traded to Stamboul, sometimes as far as Cathay. I'm a Craddock, you know."

"Funny we haven't met before. I thought I knew all the family." The captain frowned. "Of course there's the Devonshire branch."

"I belonged to that. No, not so very funny. I only drop in when some of you youngsters need advice. Peter Craddock used to come, but in his day they didn't use sail much so his advice was a little—er—out of date. They send me now. This is your first ship? Ah, yes. It's usually on the first that you need advice most."

The captain rested his face on his hands and said:

"I seem to remember the *Travancore.* She's in the old book isn't she?"

"There was a clerk of Oxford wrote something of the matter," the stranger assented. "That was after my journey to Cathay. I brought home a great ape and certain precious stones. I call to mind the ape upset a lanthorn one night and we took fire. Most serious though we poured half the sea in the ship, but happily there came a pot-bellied Tangier pirate to see what loot there was and we carried him with much slaughter, being desperate. My company was all for taking to our small galleys but I broke them with an ax and there was only the Tangier ship left. I counsel such a means if a foreign craft should come along."

"I have no men, though," the captain reminded him. "And you can't do that anyway these times." He was almost apologetic.

"I had forgotten. Well, I recall a mariner in my day named Taplow—or it may be Tarpo—who, when afire, took his ship inshore and staved her planks so that she sank but took no harm. Swimmers afterward plugged the holes and Tarpo—or it may be Taplow—emptied her then. 'Twas a long job, as I remember, but sound. His decks stood perhaps half a fathom above water while his keel rested on white sand."

"I'm a long way from sand," reminded the captain, laughing a little, "Still, one never knows. I may be able to make land and beach her. You see, the timber she's carrying ought to keep her afloat however much water she takes. It'll be a big job, though, single-handed."

"The more honor," the stranger declared. "And you're a Craddock. Still, if I should counsel a raft, well-provisioned—"

The captain shook his head.

"I don't know just what I can do alone but it'll be my best. She's my first ship and I can't let her go without me. I know what my father would have done and I can't let the family down."

"I did but jest. So you will stay with her, sink or float?"

"Of course."

The stranger rose and nodded.

"The sea does not change as much as I thought, and the Craddocks not at all."

The captain moved uncomfortably.

"I suppose you think I'm a pretty poor specimen to get in a mess like this? And I can't say I'm any too sure of getting out of it."

The stranger laughed again and fingered his beard.

"You have read and heard what the Craddocks have done and what is written and said is only what the world knows. But I could tell you things. Men are not born to command well and to keep covenants, not even the Craddocks, no more than men are born swordsmen. One must learn, slowly, and with much sweat and heartache. This I tell you to help you in the days ahead. I have seen your grandfather shake all over and like to die for terror when the guns talked at Trafalgar and his captain was slain and left him to command alone. But I stood by his side through the smoke until it was over and he was never bothered again. His grandfather, as I remember, had a grievous lack of judgment with his liquor so that his ship had no proper care. Peter Craddock and I talked with him all one night and he afterward mended. He became a great man."

"With Cook, so I have heard." The captain nodded and his eyes brightened. "He explored the Sandwich Islands."

"As you say, but remember neither he nor any other Craddock, nor any man at all made his name save through sweat and heartache and fears that he conquered. However, I counsel you to remember what Tarpo did—or it may be Taplow. The name has always escaped me."

"Yes, I'll try and beach her—" started the captain and looked up and down the empty main cabin to see where the stranger had gone. He rubbed his arms which were numb where he had been lying on them. Through the skylight the sun streamed warmly and he rose to his feet and stretched, rather surprized. Now, had he been dreaming?

He went up on deck with his head a little foggy, but feeling very refreshed and light-hearted. The sea was crisp and blue with the gentle wind and the sun was well over the horizon. The *Prince Shan* had not sunk any lower that he could see, but smoke was still oozing from the main hatch into the morning air. He nodded contentedly to himself and went below to prepare breakfast.

It was not until he had started water to boiling over the primus stove that it occurred to him that the cabin door which had been loose and slamming back and forth the previous evening was now silent. A little eerie feeling came over him as he inspected it and found it hooked back, and he stood for a long minute gazing at the chair where the stranger had sat. Then very thoughtfully he went about shaving and bathing and changing while his tea brewed.

He was standing up after breakfast, lighting a cigar, when there came a distinct scraping feeling underfoot, a slight shock, and the *Prince Shan* jarred a little and heeled while resuming a fore and aft keel. The sails made a great noise on deck. Captain Craddock looked surprized and throwing the match aside went up on the poop and there stopped.

There was a clear murmur of surf in his ears and he saw patches of white perhaps

two miles or so to starboard. Between the patches and the schooner rose a little low islet, a rocky weed-covered patch scarcely above the level of the water. The captain walked slowly to the schooner's side and, as the swell piled easily against the hull subsided, he caught a glimpse of white sand with a few dark patches of rock. The *Prince Shan* had drifted into a small sort of submerged cove on the leeward side of an islet that was certainly not on the charts.

Captain Craddock stood for a long time, gazing at the smooth sea that heaved gently about him. He may have had doubts but he had fought them down. He may not have held to an immense faith in himself, in the sea and in his ship. But at least he had returned to her, had come back to face it with her, whatever might come, and the sea had rendered him aid in his stress. The covenant was fulfilled. He would never doubt or falter again. The captain remembered Tarpo—or it may have been Taplow—and what he had done to his ship, and he laughed.

IT WAS nearly two months later when the *Cormorant*, government survey ship, coming up from the south after a week-long struggle with gales and hurricanes, ran into an area of sea literally dotted with lumber. Here and there between great planks and bulks were curiously swollen bales, and once or twice a metal drum that emitted vapor and an acrid odor.

"A bad wreck," said the survey ship captain, scanning the sea through his glasses. "The *City of Hong Kong's* report was correct but some other poor devil didn't see the breakers in time."

Half a day of steaming through the wreckage-strewn sea and the *Cormorant* lifted a low, dark patch of rock, hardly to be distinguished as an islet. Here she went slow ahead with her hand lead going and her officers taking copious notes and bearings. The man in the crow's-nest called out after a while and the captain lifted his glasses and stared away to starboard where presently into the focus there came the tops of four slender masts

It was two hours or more later before the *Prince Shan's* hull could be distinguished and longer even than that before the survey ship's boat brought its captain to the schooner's side.

"Good lord," he said, utterly amazed. Instead of a deck covered with wreckage his eyes met washed planking, neatly coiled gear, stowed sails and lashed spars. He walked slowly forward, stared a while down the main hold that smelled rankly of old fire and then peered down into the forehold, whence came strange noises.

A man stood below on neat piles of wet new lumber, a man attired in a clean white shirt, open at the throat and rolled up at the sleeves; a man in a blue-peak uniform cap, thin working serge and white canvas shoes. He was engaged in lifting planks from under him and thrusting them out of the ship's side through a ragged square hole of some considerable size.

"Below there!" said the amazed survey man at last.

Captain Craddock finished thrusting clear a long two-by-four and then looked up.

"Oh, hello," he said. He calmly ascended to the main deck and shook hands.

"Who the —— are you?" exploded the survey man at last, very red in the face. He would have thought that a castaway would show some signs of emotion.

"This is the *Prince Shan*, Portland to Tokio," answered Captain Craddock with mild surprize. "I'm Captain Craddock."

"——!" said the survey man and swallowed. "Aren't you glad to see me? Your crew was picked up weeks ago by the *Empress of Asia* an' you're supposed to be dead." He went on more calmly, "You've had a tough time, eh?"

"Fairly," said Captain Craddock. "How did you happen to get here?"

"Well," mumbled the survey man, "well." He hardly knew what to say. He had a feeling that his presence was

only just as welcome as it would have been had he called upon Captain Craddock in port. "Well," he managed at last, "the *City of Hong Kong* reported a new reef last year and I'm supposed to be surveying it. What the —— were you doing with that lumber?"

"Oh, I had to lighten ship," Captain Craddock explained, regarding the other as if he were mildly insane. He caught his arm and drew him to the side to show him the big hole cut there. "You see when I grounded she was afire so I cut that hole at low tide and at high tide she filled. Put the fire out very neatly. She stayed on the bottom of course and I can only work a few hours a day. I figured on getting her light enough, then plugging the holes and pumping her dry. She isn't strained below. A fine built ship. Quite simple really."

"Yes," choked the survey man. "Quite simple." His face was the color of a beetroot, as if his intelligence had been insulted. "An' you figured on getting this packet unloaded and afloat single-handed, eh? It's a year's work." He paused, choked again and then burst out, "Why any sort of a sea would have knocked you to pieces. There's been gales and hurricanes all between Hawaii and Samoa for the past five weeks. I don't understand it. You must have had calm weather here right along."

"Of course," murmured Captain Craddock absently. "I figured on that."

Another story by the author of

"Red" *and* "A Night in San Asensio"

W. TOWNEND

in

MacGinty's Brother

THE tramp steamer *Shelby* was discharging cargo at San Pedro.

MacGinty, the Irish deckhand, was leaning over the coaming of the No. 1 hatch by the side of Hooper, the cockney.

The Scots boatswain approached, red in the face and angry.

"MacGinty," he said, "I'm sick an' tired o' ha'in' to talk to ye! Ye're a —— insubordinate whelp! I'm reportin' ye to the mate."

"What for?" said MacGinty.

"Ye ken weel enough whit fur! When I gi'e ye a direct orrder an' ye deliberately disobey, then it's time to tak' action."

"Go to the ——!" said MacGinty. "I'm afther finishin' yer —— paintin' this past ten minutes."

"Ye did not!" said the boatswain.

He turned and walked off in the direction of the saloon deck house.

"The owld weasel!" said MacGinty.

"I warned yer," said Hooper. "You've gone too far, Mac!"

"I'm goin' farther! I'm goin' to lave the —— ship altogether!"

"You'll desert?"

"I'll desart!"

"What will you do?"

"What will I do? Listen to me, I've a brother livin' aroun' Los Angeles somewhere. I'd a letther from him four, five years ago whin I was on the run, tellin' me to come on out here to California an' he'd look afther me."

"Would he be able?"

"He's rich," said MacGinty scornfully.

The stout and friendly foreman stevedore sat on the rails amidships, chewing a black cigar.

"May I speak a worrud with ye?" said MacGinty.

"You may," said the foreman. "I'm human, same as yourself."

"I'm afther losin' me brother's address. Arl I know is he lives near a place by the name of Fullerton. Could ye help me?"

"This is a big country," said the foreman. "Tell me some more."

"Mebbe if I gave ye me brother's name ye'd know him. It's MacGinty—Jack MacGinty, an' he's rich."

The stout foreman gazed at MacGinty in amazement.

"And so you're Jack MacGinty's brother, from the old country," he chuckled. "Well, well! If that don't beat anything I ever heard!"

"An' you know where he lives?"

"I'll tell the world I know!" said the stout foreman. He wrote on a slip of paper torn from a note book. "Here's his address— You'll go to Los Angeles and change cars there. The red cars—Pacific Electric. You can't make any mistake. Show this to the conductor and he'll put you off at the nearest stop."

A LEAN, melancholy looking longshoreman in overalls and a battered hat had told MacGinty where it was possible to buy a bottle of whisky.

"Good stuff, too," he had said.

MacGinty was not particularly thirsty, but he felt that a drink would hearten him.

And so he sat at a table in a small hot room at the back of a frame house near the waterfront and drank some amber-colored liquor which the landlord, a rabbit-faced man with projecting teeth, had assured him was whisky, the best to be had in California. Though the taste was peculiar and different from the taste of any whisky he had ever drunk, MacGinty was not disposed to be critical. Whisky was whisky, however unpalatable.

Two slim, bobbed-haired young women, the fair one in blue and the dark one in pink, seated themselves on the bench on the other side of his table.

"Are you a sailor?" said the fair girl.

"I am," said MacGinty. "I'm from the *Shelby*."

"London, ain't it?" said the dark girl.

"Yes, miss, by way of Calcutta."

"A long time since I was in London," said the fair girl. "I run over each summer, but this year my chauffeur was sick!"

She and the dark girl glanced at each other and giggled.

"Indeed!" said MacGinty. "It's a pity!"

"He's very handsome!" said the dark girl.

"I'll say he is!" said the other. "Look at them eyes of his! An' his curly hair—cute, ain't it?"

They broke into peals of laughter.

The rabbit-faced man with the projecting teeth put his hands on the table and beamed.

"Evenin', Miss Rosie! Evenin', Miss Clara! Don't often have the pleasure o' seeing you these days. What'll you have?"

"What are you drinking, sailor?" said the dark girl.

"Whisky, miss."

The fair-haired girl, Rosie, said:

"Where'dja like to be buried, kid? A gentleman friend of ourn drank some of Mike's whisky Monday, aged twenty-three. He died Wednesday, aged eighty, of old age and senile decay!"

The rabbit-faced man glowered.

"Another crack like that, Rosie, an' you can beat it. See!"

"You gimme a pain!" said Rosie. "Dunno whether it hurts most to hear you or see you! Dry ginger ale, cracked ice, slice of lemon and—well, anything you got. And make it snappy!"

"Twice it!" said Clara.

The rabbit-faced man turned away, grumbling.

"You're Irish, ain't you?" said Clara.

"I am," said MacGinty.

"Irishmen are so kind!" said Rosie.

"Rosie," said Clara, "you said a mouthful!"

The rabbit-faced man brought the drinks.

"A dollar fifty," he said.

"A dollar," said Rosie. "And our gentleman friend pays."

"A dollar please, mister."

"What's that?" said MacGinty. "I'm not payin'."

Rosie leaned across the table, scorn in her blue eyes.

"Sailor, when you asked me and Clara to have a drink, did you or didn't you mean it?"

"Beg yer pardon, miss, but did I really ax ye to have a dhrink?"

"You cert'nly did," said Rosie.

MacGinty paid and the rabbit-faced man retired, smiling.

Again the girls laughed.

"You're a nice feller, asking a coupla ladies to drink with you and then turning them down, ain't you?" said Rosie. "Say, you wanna see the sights? Los Angeles ain't a bad li'l' burg."

"Got much money on you, sailor?" asked Clara.

"Well," said MacGinty, stiffening, "if it's not a rude question, what the —— has it to do with you? I don't see what it's got do with you at all."

"You're forgetting yourself, ain't you?" said Clara, very coldly. "Did you or didn't you say you'd show us a good time in Los Angeles?"

"I never said anything about Los Angeles at arl! I'm goin' there, yes, but I'm on me way to me brother's."

"Gee!" said Rosie. "He's got a brother! Is he as good lookin' a boy as you are, sailor? What's his name?"

MacGinty was ill at ease and restless.

"MacGinty—Jack MacGinty. He's rich."

"Jack MacGinty your brother?" said Rosie.

"Gee!" said Clara.

The rabbit-faced man was passing. Rosie dragged at his arm.

"Mike," she whispered, "this is Jack MacGinty's brother!"

"Jack MacGinty!" said the rabbit-faced man weakly. He stared at MacGinty, goggle-eyed. "So your brother's Jack MacGinty, is he? Gosh!"

He put his hand up to the lower part of his face and spoke out of the corner of his mouth to the girls.

"Lay off him— Get me?"

Though his voice was low, MacGinty heard and was puzzled.

"I've got to be movin'," he said. "Did I undherstan' you young ladies was goin' to Los Angeles?"

"We ain't!" said Rosie.

"Not this ev'nin'," said Clara.

They looked subdued and rather frightened.

MacGINTY sat in one of the front seats of the crowded car and gazed happily out through the open window at the passing landscape—fields and orchards, bungalows covered with climbing vines, oil derricks and the far-off hills. The speed at which they traveled exhilarated him. The fresh air beat upon his face.

The car rocked on a curve and an elderly, shabby man, with glasses and a pale, plump face, seated by his side, was thrown off his balance and would have fallen had not MacGinty held on to him.

"Thank you," he said breathlessly. "Thank you."

One of the cargomen—MacGinty remembered his long thin nose and his rather foolish grin—rose to his feet and walked down the aisle between the seats. He saw MacGinty and nodded.

"Good ev'nin', *Shelby!*"

"Good ev'nin'," said MacGinty.

His friend with the glasses and the pale, plump face was studying him sidewise, he observed, rubbing his chin and looking very serious.

"Mr. Shelby, you saved me from a bad fall. Morris is my name."

They shook hands. MacGinty accepted a cigar.

And then the man with the glasses and the plump, pale face settled himself back on his seat and began to talk.

"What are your plans on this side?" he said presently. "Great country, California, ain't it?"

"Plinty of opportunities for a fella to git rich if he wants."

"We're all rich in California, Mr. Shelby. Most of us, anyhow. But we're a democratic race an' because a man's rich it don't say he's gotta change his habits and his way o' livin'! You don't catch me, for instance, dolling myself up like a movie actor and being uncomfortable. No sir! If I've got money I know how to spend it."

"It's wan thing to be rich," said MacGinty, "but it's all another, they say, to know what to do when you are rich. I'd like to be given the chanst, anyway!"

Mr. Morris smiled a dry, tight-lipped smile.

"I could put you on the right road to'rds making more money in one year than you'd of thought there was in the whole world. But you need capital to start with—not much, but enough."

"I've a brother livin' aroun' these parts who's rich. I'm goin' to see him now. Mebbe if I was to ax he'd help me."

Mr. Morris' pale eyes were very bright and eager.

"Let's go eat somewhere. I know a swell place an' it's quiet."

"I haven't the time," said MacGinty.

"Say, you wouldn't surely let a matter of half an hour or so stand between you and a fortune, would you?"

They climbed down from the car in a crowded, noisy street and entered a small restaurant in a side street. Here, seated at a table near the kitchen door, MacGinty and the pale, plump Mr. Morris ate their supper of steak and French fried potatoes and green corn and cabbage and sweet potatoes and thick brown gravy and fried onions.

Mr. Morris talked volubly. Between huge mouthfuls he explained, without actually goin into details, how MacGinty could be rich. He owned land northeast of Los Angeles, in the San Gabriel foothills and, on payment of five thousand dollars cash, MacGinty could come in as his partner and help him develop his property on entirely new lines.

"Five thousand dollars is a lot of money," said MacGinty.

"Not for California! Listen, this scheme of mine's a cinch and no gamble. Put in five thousand and I guarantee you'll double it in six months' time. I like you and I wanna help you. I don't believe in bein' a hog. No, sir! I've made my pile an' could retire today, but —believe me—that's not the point. Now, Mr. Shelby, listen to me an' I'll give you some figures that'll surprize you!"

"You keep callin' me Shelby," said MacGinty. "That's not my name at arl. That's the name of my ship."

Mr. Morris looked bewildered.

"The ship you crossed over from Ireland in?"

"More or less. Me name's MacGinty. Me brother's Jack MacGinty."

Mr. Morris stared at Mac Ginty with an intensity of gaze that astounded him.

"Jack MacGinty is your brother!"

"Yes. Do you know him?"

"One of my best friends."

"When I tell him I've met you he'll be plazed."

Mr. Morris beckoned to the waiter.

"Joe, two apple pies and two coffees." He turned to MacGinty. "Will you excuse me one minute, I have to telephone to a man. There's a call box at the cigar stand next door!"

"Sure!" said MacGinty. "Take yer time, Mr. Morris!"

After waiting five minutes by the clock over the pay desk at which a stout, elderly woman in black sat knitting, MacGinty ate his pie. He waited another five minutes and drank his coffee. He leaned back in his chair, picking his teeth, watching the waiters and the other people in the restaurant. Already the restaurant was emptying. Soon, at this rate, he would be all alone. He grew impatient. Where the —— had the man gone to?

Suddenly he decided he could wait no longer. He rose to his feet.

Joe, the waiter, stood beside him.

"Goin'?"

"I am. Tell me frind I had to ketch me car."

"I'll tell him anythin' you like after you paid for your supper."

"Me frind will pay whin he comes back from the telephone. He went to the call box next door at the cigar stan'."

"There's no call box next door an' no cigar stand in the street!"

"Well, anyway—" said MacGinty. He broke off, frowning. No call box next door. "He said he wanted to use the telephone."

Another waiter, bald-headed and sour, drew near.

"Wha's-a matter, Joe?"

"Guy tryin' to duck out without payin'!"

"That's not thrue!" said MacGinty.

The stout woman who had sat at the pay desk waddled toward them.

"What's the throuble?" she said.

"He's tryin' to get away without payin' for the food him an' his pardner ate!" said Joe.

"You'll pay!" said the stout woman. "Understand?"

"I will not pay!" said MacGinty.

"You'll pay!" said the woman. "Right now you'll pay!"

"Out of my road!" said MacGinty. With a wide sweep of his arm he brushed the bald-headed, sour waiter aside.

A third waiter, a big man with black bristly hair, hurried up.

"Grab him, Eddie!" said the woman.

MacGinty ran in the direction of the door. Joe flung a chair in front of him and he tripped and fell. The black-haired waiter Eddie threw his arms about his waist, Joe grabbed at his legs. They fought on the floor, rolling over and over between the tables.

MacGinty struggled into a kneeling position, in spite of the pressure that bore him down. He wriggled sidewise and caught hold of Eddie around the neck and hauled. The bald waiter crept toward him and hit him in the eye. MacGinty scrambled to his feet and tried to reach him but he turned and escaped. A chair crashed on top of his head and he collapsed with Eddie and Joe piled on top of him.

"Let me up an' I'll show ye what fightin' means!" he said.

"Go call a cop!" said some one.

"He's Irish!" said the stout woman placidly. "Let's hear what he's got to say for himself."

MacGinty sat up. His head was aching. He had a pain at the back of his neck. He had hurt his wrist.

"I'm off of a ship layin' at San Pedhro. A fella called Morris axed me would I care for some supper. I would. I towld him I was goin' to see me brother. He says will I excuse him while he goes to the call box at the cigar sthand next door. He niver came back."

"Who is your brother?" said the woman.

"He's Jack MacGinty. Wan of the richest men aroun' Los Angeles."

"So Jack MacGinty's your brother, is he?" said the woman. "And the other feller ducked out an' left you. What were you talkin' about?"

"To tell ye the thruth I'm afther desartin' me ship an' he was sayin' how I could make me fortune, if I could lay me hands on some capital. I said me brother would let me have arl I wanted. I'd no sooner towld him me brother's name than he laves me."

The stout woman in black and the three waiters and the only two customers who remained and a white capped cook were all laughing.

MacGinty stood up.

"There's nothin' to laugh at!" he said.

The woman dropped limply into a chair and wiped her eyes.

"An' you said you'd get Jack MacGinty to put some money into a schame this guy was tellin' ye of! Would you believe it? Man, you're a threasure. Be off with you now this minute. Your brother will pay me next time he's passing." She spoke to Joe. "See Mr. MacGinty into the right car."

"If that fella, Morris, comes back from telephonin'," said MacGinty, "will ye tell him, plaze, I had to be movin'."

"I promise you," said the woman.

MacGINTY stood by the side of the track and watched the lights of the cars disappear into the darkness. Then he turned and walked slowly down a white road inches deep in soft dust, between sweet-scented orange orchards.

A broad-shouldered, tough looking man came limping toward him.

"Got a match on yuh, bo'?"

MacGinty searched in his pockets.

"Put 'em up!" said the man.

Without argument MacGinty raised his hands.

"Don't p'int that pistol at me, mister, plaze."

"Don't talk!" The gunman slid his

left hand into MacGinty's right inside pocket and drew out his wallet. "Move an inch an' I'll shoot!"

"Mister," said MacGinty in a quavering voice, "you ain't goin' to keep me here long, are ye?"

"Any tricks with me an' you'll be sorry! Stand still!"

The muzzle of the pistol was deflected from MacGinty's stomach as the gunman opened the wallet. MacGinty hit him in the face. He staggered and fell. MacGinty sprawled on top of him and grabbed the pistol.

A hand gripped him by the back of the neck and held him.

"Cut it out!" said a hoarse voice. "What's the game?"

MacGinty was hauled to his feet. He turned angrily. Another gun was jammed against his stomach and he swore under his breath.

"I can manage him now, Milkweed," said the first gunman.

"How much has he got, Shorty? Fifty-fifty."

"You fellas think a —— lot o' yerselves, don't ye!" said MacGinty. "But I don't forget faces. Undherstan'! I'll have me brother on yer thrack inside the hour. I'm on me way to his house now. Whin I tell ye me brother's Jack MacGinty, mebbe ye'll lay off!"

"Jack MacGinty your brother?" said Shorty. "You speakin' the truth, bo? Say, how'd we know you was Jack MacGinty's brother? Why, we wouldn't of dreamt of layin' a finger on yuh, if we'd known that! Why didn't you say so?"

"Give him his wallet, Shorty. Look sharp!"

"Sure! Say, feller, here's an extra ten for yourself."

"An' keep yer trap shut about this business, for Heaven's sake!" said Milkweed. He thrust some coins into MacGinty's hand. "We're poor men, Shorty an' me, an' we can't afford to get in wrong with Jack."

MacGinty heard the sound of their heavy steps diminishing in the distance as they hurried through the orchard.

A TALL, young man in a gray suit talked to a girl in white at the corner of a street lined with pepper trees.

"Beg yer pardon," said MacGinty. "Might I ax ye a question?"

The young man said crossly:

"What d'you want? If you're panhandlin' round here, my advice is beat it. I'm a deputy sheriff an' town marshal an' constable an' lord knows what else. Get me?" He opened his jacket and showed a silver star on his shirt. "That's off my mind, anyway. Now, what is it? This is my busy night."

"I'm lost!" said MacGinty. "I'm afther lookin' for me brother's house this past half hour an' I can't find it."

"Your brother?" said the young man with the star on his shirt.

MacGinty drew himself up and squared his shoulders.

"Me brother's Jack MacGinty! He lives in a big white house set back from the sthreet in an orchard, they tell me, an' he's rich."

The young man whistled softly. By the light of an arc lamp MacGinty saw the sudden look of interest in his face.

"And so you're Jack MacGinty's brother! What happened to you?"

"I had a fall!" said MacGinty.

"You had a dozen falls from the state of your clothes!"

"Them's the bosun's!" said MacGinty. "So who cares! I'm just out from Irelan' an' new to the counthry."

"Don't apologize for that," said the young man.

"I wasn't," said MacGinty. "But I'll be glad to git to me brother's! Could ye tell me the nearest way?"

"I could. Go straight on up the street three blocks, turn to the right, walk another three blocks. Your brother's house is on the left, in the trees. Give Jack MacGinty my compliments and tell him O'Brien said he was coming to see him one of these days. Understand?"

"I'll give him the message—yes."

"That's good. Is his ankle better, do you know?"

"How should I know? It's fifteen years since I saw him!"

MacGinty had an idea that the young man was making fun of him.

"Say, you ought to be proud of your brother. If in fifteen years from now you're as rich as he is, and as respected, you'll likely be living on the fat of the land in San Quentin. That's one of the most select and prosperous parts of California. Takes money to live there, though."

MacGinty walked on. He turned and saw the tall, young man and the girl standing under the arc lamp watching him. He knew that as Jack MacGinty's brother he had in their eyes an importance he had done nothing to deserve. He was pleased that his brother was thought so well of.

THE big white house glistened like polished marble in the light of the rising moon. There were four tall white columns to the portico and a flight of broad low steps and rows of dark windows. The tall old-fashioned lamps that bordered the gravel drive were not yet lighted. Only the yellow glow visible through the fanlight over the front door showed that the place was inhabited.

MacGinty, hidden among the trees on the semicircle of lawn, was for once in his life awed.

Here was his brother's house. A mansion! As big as Cork Customs House. As big as any of the big houses he had raided during the trouble. As big as the Bank of Ireland. As big as any chateau he had seen smashed to smithereens by shell fire in France.

And what must he do now?

Walk boldly up the drive and knock at the front door and ring the bell and tell the butler—there would be a butler, of course—he had come all the way from Cork to California to see his brother. And was he home?

No, it couldn't be done!

The butler wouldn't believe he was speaking the truth. He'd see the dust and the tear in the knee of the boatswain's trousers and his broken collar and he'd tell him to—what was the word they used?—to beat it!

MacGinty had an uneasy feeling that this brother of his who had risen so high in the world might be ashamed of him and would prefer to see him alone before any of the rest of the household could have a chance to compare the two of them.

And why not, thought MacGinty.

Hadn't a man in his brother Jack's position a perfect right to do all in his power to preserve the respect and the good opinion of his inferiors? Of course he had.

And so MacGinty made his way cautiously across the gravel drive and through the orange trees to the lawn at the side of the house where tall windows with their drawn blinds cast patches of light on to the grass.

From where he stood by a bed of roses he could hear the low murmur of voices. He waited for a while and then, impatient of further delay, moved forward slowly, making no noise on the grass, to the shelter of a low palm tree with overhanging fronds.

The night was warm; the windows were wide open.

A man and a woman were talking. That would be his brother, reflected MacGinty, and his brother's wife whom he had never seen.

There was another man in the room with them, he realized. And this other man was angry.

MacGinty was positive it could not be Jack who was angry. He did not know why, but he felt that Jack was too big a man, too important, too much of an influence for good in the life of his new country to go losing his temper.

Suddenly the voices that had hitherto been low and restrained, conveying no meaning, became louder and more distinct, and straightway he was conscious that what he heard was no ordinary quarrel but a matter of life or death to one of the two men in the room.

"I guess you don't appreciate the posi-

tion. You swindled me out of that money!"

"I repeat—I did not swindle you!"

"You did. You took money that didn't belong to you—my money—and used it."

"With your sister's permission."

"That's a lie, Jack!" said the woman. "A lie, and you know it!"

MacGinty felt a sharp thrill of terror. The man and the woman were accusing Jack of stealing.

"Listen here, Annie, you know I didn't steal that money."

"I know nothing. Leave me out of it."

"Say, Jack, cut out the injured innocence stuff. You're a thief and nothing you can say is going to persuade people different."

"You say I stole your money. That's a —— lie! You benefitted, didn't you? I borrowed some money—borrowed, not stole—and you'd never have known if some one—Annie, of course!—hadn't split on me. You've got no kick coming, Henry, neither now nor any time else—you've had your money back, with interest, again and again."

"You're a twister, from the toes up, Jack. You made a cool million dollars out of that money of mine, and that helped you to make more millions."

"Talk sense, for ——'s sake, man!"

"I don't care how much you made, but you're rich, I'm poor. I want my share, Jack. I'm going to have it!"

"You've had your share."

"MacGinty, you listen! I want money the worst way possible. Come across and come quick, or I'll talk!"

"Henry, if I have any more of it I'll ring the bell and have you put out of the house.

The woman laughed.

"Don't get excited, Jack, but there's no one at home but ourselves and Henry knows it."

"You're on his side, Annie, aren't you?"

"I want justice done, that's all. Henry has a claim on both of us, I guess."

"Justice? You'll drive me crazy! I borrowed some money and paid it back, again and again, and you talk of justice. You call me a thief, Henry, you're worse —you're a blackmailer! If I don't come across with more hush money, you'll talk. Well, talk and be ——!"

MacGinty, listening outside the window, was shocked. He didn't believe for one moment his brother had done anything wrong. The question was—ought he to go to his rescue or not?

"I'm going to have money, I'm desperate!"

"Stand back! Do you hear what I say!"

"Keep your hands away from that pocket!"

And then there came the sound of scuffling—men fighting, wrestling, straining to throw each other; feet shuffling; grunts of anger, a kind of gurgling as if some one were being throttled, and a gasp:

"Leggo my throat, —— you! Leggo my throat!"

MacGinty moved nearer the lighted windows behind which his brother and the other man were fighting.

He heard the woman say:

"Oh, don't! Please don't!"

He hesitated, not knowing even now whether to interfere.

The woman began to scream:

"Help, help! He's killing him! Jack!"

Her voice broke on a piercing, high-pitched shriek.

At the crash of the pistol shot MacGinty ran forward in a sudden panic, flung open the screen door, tore aside the yellow blind and paused on the threshold of the big room, dazzled by the glare of light.

A tall broad man leaned against a big table. His face was white; his eyes were dark, blood-shot, and wild, like the eyes of a drunken man. His mouth was open, he breathed heavily and in his right hand was an automatic pistol.

A fair-haired youngish woman in a pale green frock, and she too was white of face, stood by the book-shelves opposite the tall windows. She held her hands to

her face and stared blankly at MacGinty over the tips of her fingers.

And on the floor MacGinty saw his brother lying back uppermost, his face hidden on his folded arms, a pool of blood soaking into the soft carpet.

One glance was enough. MacGinty knew from the rigidity of the thickset body and the broad shoulders that the brother whom he had not seen for so long was dead. He touched him timidly and straightened himself up and stared at the man with the pistol.

No one spoke.

In the silence MacGinty was conscious of the far-off hooting of an engine's whistle and the clanging bell. He was conscious, too, of the scent of roses from the big bowl on the table and the beating of wings from a cage, covered by a dark cloth and hanging from a chain suspended from the ceiling.

At last he said hoarsely—

"What happened?"

"Can't you see?" said the man with the gun.

"You killed him!"

"I killed him in self-defense," said the man.

"That's my brother!" said MacGinty. "Jack MacGinty. You killed him!"

The woman approached, wild incredulity in the gray eyes.

"Jack MacGinty your brother!"

"Yes, marm."

"I never knew he had a brother!"

"No, marm, mebbe he was ashamed of me, havin' gone ahead the way he has. I'm his brother Dan. I came here tonight to see him."

The man with the gun cleared his throat noisily.

"If I hadn't killed him he'd have killed me, sure."

"With his fishts!" said MacGinty, scornfully. It's likely!" He shuddered. "What are ye goin' to do about it?" he asked.

The man and the woman gazed at each other, helplessly, their faces stricken.

"Henry!" said the woman in a whisper. "Henry, what are we going to do? Tell me!" When the man said nothing she burst out passionately, "Can't you say something, suggest something?"

"He stole that money!" said the man.

"You must leave here before they find you!"

"What good would that do?" And then he laughed in a way that roused MacGinty to a sullen fury. "Besides, what have I done, hey? Nothing! I tell you, if I hadn't killed him he'd have killed me!"

"An unarmed man, shot down in cowld blood?" said MacGinty. "You may tell that tale to the polis, you an' the woman there, the pair o' ye! Who are ye, marm? What are you doin' here?"

She reddened.

"What am I doing here? I'm in my own house." She shivered and nodded toward the dead man at her feet. "That's my husband."

MacGinty choked.

"Your husban'! Mother of God! An' you?" He spoke to the killer, "Who are you?"

"Mrs. MacGinty's brother," said the man. "And now you know."

"You, his wife: you, her brother! God forgive ye! Haven't ye any shame, the two of you, to be killin' an unarmed man?"

The woman put a hand on his arm and gazed into his face. She was a handsome woman in a faded, colorless way but MacGinty hated her.

"You don't understand!" she said. "You can't! You think you can judge, but you can't. Why not go before any one comes? Are you in need of money?"

MacGinty flung off her hand.

"Arrah! don't be touchin' me!" he said. "You're afther killin' me brother, Jack, between ye an' now you offer me money will I go an' say nothin' of what I seen. What next will ye do?"

There was a moment's tense silence. The invisible bird continued to beat its wings against the bars of an invisible cage. In the distance a dog was barking.

The woman turned swiftly to her brother and said, breathlessly:

"Henry, it wasn't you did the killing! This man came—do you understand—this man shot Jack! We found him here with him!"

The big, white-faced man with the dark eyebrows made a sudden dive at MacGinty and caught him by the wrists. MacGinty struggled to free himself but the killer was too strong for him and held him tight. His rather coarse lips parted in a grin of derision and he said—

"Guess you'll be sorry now you butted in!"

"Let go of me!" said MacGinty. "Let go!"

The woman screamed:

"Help, help!"

MacGinty, trying to free himself, trod on the dead man's arm and would have fallen but for the hold on his wrists. He shuddered and felt sick.

"Let go of me!" he shouted. "Ah! what are ye doin', you?"

The blind was pulled aside and a man in a gray suit entered the room and stood looking about him.

"What's all this?" he said. "Cut out the rough stuff, you two. Do you hear me?"

"He killed my husband," sobbed the woman. "Killed my husband in cold blood."

"That's a Judas lie!" said MacGinty.

"We caught him before he could get away," said the white faced man. "Look, O'Brien, there's his gun on the floor there."

"That's good enough for me," said the man in gray. "There are a —— sight too many hobos around town these days! Hold his hands together, please!"

MacGinty recognized the tall, young deputy sheriff who had shown him the star on his shirt and told him the way to his brother's.

His last hopes faded.

He had fought with the Munster Fusiliers against the Germans in France, the Turks in Gallipoli, the Bulgarians in Macedonia; he had fought the Bolsheviks in North Russia; he had fought with the Sinn Feiners against the R. I. C. and the Black and Tans in night ambushes and skirmishes out on the hills, he had fought with the Republicans against the Free Staters; he had fought Orangemen on the house tops of Belfast, an exile from the South; he had been shelled by Spanish cruisers off the coast of Morocco, deckhand on a gun running tramp from Newcastle, disguised as a Greek; he had been shipwrecked in the Persian Gulf and sniped by Arabs. He had escaped all these perils without harm, and here, in the house of his dead brother, he was trapped at last, accused of a murder committed by some one else.

"Listen," he said. "Orf'cer, you listen! What would I come arl this way for, only to kill me brother? Is it likely?"

"My husband was rich," said the woman, checking her sobs. "This brother of his hated him because he was poor. He tried to get money out of him."

"Mother of God!" said MacGinty. "May they be sthruck dead this minute, with their sowls black with their lies!"

"Hold his wrists together," said O'Brien.

There was a click as the handcuffs were fastened.

"What the —— do you think you're doing, you blasted fool!"

MacGinty realized with a feeling almost of suffocation that the tall, young deputy-sheriff, O'Brien, had fastened the handcuffs on the man who had killed his brother.

"Not so much of it!" he said. "I know what I'm doing. It was you killed MacGinty, not this man. I followed him from where he stopped and asked me the way, I watched him hiding by the palm tree, I heard Mrs. MacGinty cry for help and I heard the shot fired that killed her husband. I saw this man go through the window and I followed as fast as I could from the trees where I was waiting. But I stopped at the window. Do you see, Mrs. MacGinty? I stopped at the window, handy enough in case of danger, but where nobody'd spot me! I wanted evidence, as usual, Mrs. MacGinty, and I

got it! All the evidence I need! I know who's guilty and I know who's not guilty."

MacGinty passed his hands over his forehead and sighed.

"A near thing, arl the same. They thried to make out it was meself killed me brother. Jack wrote me in Irelan' an' axed would I come over an' see him. Is it likely I'd kill the only brother I have?"

He dropped on his knees and with an effort turned the dead man over on to his broad back and stared blankly at the gray, lined face of a stranger, old enough to be his father.

He rose to his feet.

"This isn't me brother," he said thickly. "It's some wan I never saw in me life!"

"You told me you were Jack MacGinty's brother," said O'Brien.

"But I am. John MacGinty's me brother. I came to see him."

"This isn't John MacGinty," said the woman sullenly. "I knew he was crazy the minute I set eyes on the poor fish."

"This is Jackson MacGinty," said O'Brien. "Jackson, not John! Jack MacGinty, the bootlegger." A perplexed look crossed the fresh-colored, boyish face and he laughed. "Did you say your brother was John MacGinty?"

"John or Jack, it's the same to me. This isn't him anyway."

"We call him old Johnny — 'Irish' Johnny. You'll find his shack the other side of the depot. Some of the boys will tell you where John MacGinty lives—he peddles vegetables and fruit and fish. If you like, I'll take you to him as soon as I'm through with these two."

SIDNEY HERSCHEL SMALL'S

New Story of Japan

Sunset

A SLENDERLY sinister shape, all iron-gray, the north-Japan temple of the Fourth Valorous Samurai rose against a sky already faintly tinged with the first smoky purples of sunset. Crested at its summit like a feudal helmet of the shogunates, with two scaly carp lifting their curved bodies from either angle of the roof, bristling with horned gables and gargoyled eaves, the temple seemed monstrous, impossible, a dragonlike fantasy of architecture. All the horrible fish, all the nauseous birds, all the half-men or entire demons fused to make a curiously complete analogy.

The temple which bears the name of Izamako, fourth and most famous of the sons of his father, is set in a deep ravine. The sides are volcanic rock, little more accessible than the sheer precipice at the upper end. Beyond the rock-wall are the gentler slopes of the mountain, which empties a sleeting icy waterfall over a ninety-foot cliff. This cararact becomes a fierce little stream hissing down the temple cañon; the temple itself straddles water formed in a pool and is near enough the cascade to take the chill spray on its southern face.

According to legend the gods of the underseas have been 'known to appear to devout worshipers—many years ago. Izamako himself, being made a god after his death—self-inflicted, after a score of enemies drove him up the cañon beyond which escape was impossible—has been visible to more than one priest, although none of the villagers have ever seen him. Peasants, however, as even the lowest of temple-sweepers know, have never rightly understood visions.

THE gaunt outline of the roof, visible between a gap in the high slopes of the mountain proper, swam before Hastings' eyes like the lovely carved gates of the second heaven. The north-province buyer for the Asiatic-Import was running grimly enough along a lower path, which, he had been told, led to the village of Izamako and, though little used, would save him many miles in his search for brocades. When he saw the roof he turned toward the place of worship instantly, scrambling in his haste through a patch of thorn-bush. Once on the way to the temple he began to climb rapidly.

"Fellow can live in this country a hundred years," he was thinking, "hundred years, and never know when a temple'll pop out at him. Don't know

anything about this one, but I'm glad to see it—glad I saw it."

He was. The chase had grown too swift for his taste.

Before he was far from the lower path he heard men's voices, in a new, exultant tone. Hard on this he heard also the falling of pebbles, and knew that they were after him as hard as ever.

Given his start, along a path where a pursuer was completely out of sight until twenty feet away, Hastings' fear of a hurled knife vanished. The men would make every effort to overtake him on the narrow rock-cut way, but he believed that he would reach the temple before them. Once inside, he would offer the priests a gift large enough to insure safe escort to the village of Izamako.

The men pursuing him were, Hastings believed, *eta*, those outcasts who gather hungrily—and hungry—about every Japanese village and, scum and scour of the gutters, exist upon what they can pick from them. He wondered, as he scrambled up the ever-steepening path, where the pariah *etas* had learned that he was carrying a little sack of gold yen. It came to him that he had told the innkeeper at lunch that he was ready and willing to pay a good price for brocades of proper texture and color and that the sellers might have their money at once in gold, not in paper nor promises.

He felt that even in this he had not been unduly careless. The *eta* would rob a man and kill him with the greatest of pleasure for a few lousy sen if they thought they could get away with it.

The path he had taken was lonely. He had passed no villagers. The way had been deserted of all save untended shrines. This had, earlier, cheered him, since it probably meant that no white man had ever set foot along it before him.

Now, however, he was thinking:

"Another turn or two and I'll be at the gate. Wonder what the *eta* will do. Prob'ly wait for me to come out. I'd like a crack at 'em well enough, but twenty's too many. . . .

Before long, he supposed, as he swung around a narrow cleft in the rock path, he'd be carrying a gun, like a kid fresh from the States.

Even as he laughed at the thought, he wished bitterly for just that thing.

One of the tattered pursuers had clambered along some shorter goat-track cut in the ravine's side—no more than a series of slanting toe-holes—and had reached the path, blocking the white man's way. Hastings' mind worked automatically. Any prolonged fight, any flinching from the pariah's long knife, even an attempted escape up the side of the chasm, meant that the rest of the *eta* would be on him before his shout could

be heard in the temple. He was not even certain that his voice would carry over the increasing roar of water falling somewhere behind the temple.

The white man's head had been down; he did not raise it now, and saw the *eta* half-visually, half-instinctively.

He pushed ahead four or five steps until the fellow's rags almost fluttered

against his face, and tried to avoid blinking as he heard, or thought he heard, the little swish of air—the Japanese's knife possibly, the suck of the near water, surely. Then, his own brain clicked him into action. He lunged forward, taking the *eta* about the middle.

He heard, now, the "mahhhh!" of surprize as his arms closed around the *eta's* waist, and felt, like a tiny hot lash, a sting somewhere on his back.

What Hastings did now he did so calmly that it seemed to him almost as if his muscles obeyed some preconceived plan and none of his own making.

The burn of the knife found him twisting swiftly to bring his fist in a short savage uppercut against the Japanese's shooting chin, a glancing blow that caused the stocky body to do no more than writhe with momentary pain. Hastings shoved his left arm high under the *eta's* armpits and against the upper arm, putting his whole weight and strength behind the effort. He was rewarded by the brown man's snarl, and knew that his attempt to avoid a second knife-thrust was, for the time, successful.

He held him so a second, and then in some uncanny way realized that the Japanese had shifted the knife from hand to hand, behind the white man's back.

Hastings swung the *eta* half around.

So rapid was his movement that both stumbled, fell, and were in the icy water a dozen feet below the path. In the instant of falling Hastings—as if from very far off—heard the yapping of the pack, now close to the spot of the fight.

It seemed, next, as if night had fallen, black as a pit; he was in an immensity of darkness, a darkness which packed close up to him and hugged him, enfolding him in a smother of black feathers. Something hacked at his arm, something which despite the cold of the mountain stream was hot and searing as a whiplash.

His arm, he discovered with surprize, was about the pariah's neck tightly. White man and brown were half in the swift water, half against a rock. Hastings was uppermost and the *eta* was frantically wielding the knife in an effort to rid himself of the unwelcome burden.

It was curious that the knife didn't hurt more.

The cries came closer.

Hastings pinioned the Japanese's knife-hand against the rock, paused a moment, realized the nearness of the *eta*, glanced upward at the path. Before the first of the pariahs swarmed around the bend in the rock way, he tumbled both Japanese and himself off the rock, shoved viciously with his legs, and then half-lay, half-crouched in semidarkness, the other still under him and the knife safely held against the bottom of the stream.

The *eta's* villainous face was close to his. The hair of the pariah's head was stringy with water. The hot brown eyes glared wildly into Hastings' own, and suddenly, by their veiling expression, told the white man that action was intended.

Hastings pushed downward violently. and cut the *eta's* cry off with no more noise than an overtone in the gurgling of the water.

Hastings' own body was partly in the water, supported now by that of the Japanese. He held the pariah fiercely tight, keeping the brown face immersed with his own shoulder, never loosing his grip of the knife-hand. His other arm he kept wound about the *eta's* neck.

"*Futatsu nagara.* Both of them should be here," he heard. "Katako was to stop him here—"

"Perhaps it was higher up," a second voice suggested.

Hastings pressed the brown face deeper into the freezing water and waited.

"It is dangerous to rob a *seiyo-jin*," Hastings heard next.

"*Abunaku te mo kamau mono ka!* Who cares if it is dangerous? Think of the gold on that white man, and what the gold will buy!"

There was silence.

Some one said—

"But where is Katako?"

A babble of sound—Katako was higher on the path, he had made a mistake as to the meeting-place; no, Katako had gone

out of sight and then feared to attempt stopping the *seiyo-jin;* the *seiyo-jin,* having a snake for a mother, had perhaps wriggled past Katako unseen and escaped.

The *eta* who appeared to be the leading spirit said angrily:

"We talk too much. The *seiyo-jin* may have gone faster than Katako and arrived first. Katako is doubtless after him. We will all continue along the path. No, you, Setsu, remain here in case Katako came very slowly—" he stopped, while Hastings remained without moving, only pressing down the harder— "and four or five of you go back rapidly to the end of the trail. If any one comes let me know of it. Or if the *seiyo-jin* has slipped by us and manages to return, call. Is it all clear?"

It was all clear.

The leader and the majority of his fellow outcasts pushed toward the temple. Others returned down the path, and Hastings could hear them discuss the ways in which they would block the white man's escape. Since they already knew the twists and turns and possible exits, they would, he felt, do it successfully. One of the band, Setsu, leaned against a rock and awaited the missing Katako.

For the space of centuries Hastings remained motionless. His arms, his entire body, seemed chilled, a block of ice. He wondered how the *eta* Katako beneath him must be feeling.

Hastings realized then for the first time that there was no longer any resistance in the brown body. Katako was dead.

His teeth went to his lip, and he bit deeply. He released Katako, and hastily propped the dead Japanese against a rock, hidden from the upper path. Curious how the water tore at the limp body, as if wishing to hurry it to the valley where all might see.

Hastings made certain that Katako's body was secured from the tearing of the water, and then very slowly began to climb the dozen feet to the path. Ascent on the opposite side of the stream was, he realized, impossible; the rock descended sheer to the water, without hold or crevice of any kind.

Whatever noise he made was concealed by the sound of the rushing water.

Before he was his own length from the stream he paused, stopped and then let himself down again to the water. He searched the two-feet deep coldness, at first frantically, then more slowly. At last he found what he sought. It had slid against a rock and, excepting the hilt, was completely under it.

As he shoved the long knife into his coat pocket, thrusting the keen blade through the fabric in his haste, he looked up again.

Setsu had not moved. *Eta*-fashion, since danger and the actual chase was no longer his immediate concern, the pariah, his back to Hastings, hummed and sang contentedly. It was possible that some few of the many yen taken from the white man after he had been killed would come to Setsu. Setsu was very happy in the mere thinking of it. He would have enjoyed seeing the white man die, for it was said that their blood was as black as a pig's!

"Who twice
Shall live his youth?"

Setsu was not aware of the particular song he was singing. In a few hours more how delightfully drunk he would be!

"What flower, faded,
Blooms again?"

Hastings had crawled painfully to the edge of the path.

"Fugitive as dew
Is the form regretted;"

The white man raised to his knees. Now that they were out of the icy water which had nearly frozen them the cuts on his arm began to ooze blood; he smeared his sodden coat with carmine stickiness as he pulled out the knife. With the same gesture he came to his feet and stepped softly toward the blissful Setsu.

"The regretted form
Is seen only
In a moment of dr—"

Hastings' knife lifted, fell; the word rumbled out as the Japanese's body swayed, and, with surprizing swiftness, drooped over the rock above the path.

To the white man it was all as dream-like as the final unspoken word of the *eta*. As he himself staggered slightly, the abrupt thought came to him that he had never killed a man—men—before. How easy it was! First Katako, and then Setsu. Before the matter of deaths and dying was over he himself would be killed. He wondered if it would be as quick, as effortless, as Setsu's going.

All for the sake of the little sack of minted gold coins fastened to his belt. Unconsciously he made sure that the cloth container was secured in its regular place. The slits through which his belt ran were, he had long known, worn. He wanted the money neither stolen nor lost. In some way possession of it had become a symbol, but of what he was uncertain.

Earlier, he remembered, he would have been willing to hand it over to the pariahs. But they would never have been satisfied with that. Their ratlike minds would have feared that the foreigner would see to it that they were punished. Robbery, for them, meant years in a cage-jail, twirling endless *geta*-strings for straw sandals.

Hastings decided not to shove Setsu's body off the path and into the singing stream. He knew that he could never touch the dead man. Revulsion flooded over him. The very sight of the fallen Japanese dizzied the white man.

The slashes on his forearm had stopped bleeding, but he kept the limb behind him that he might not see the congealed blood.

His eyes followed the indentations in the rock where Katako had hurried to cut him off. He realized that he could not climb along it, even were he in good condition instead of being nauseated and exhausted. Behind him, he remembered, was a portion of the pariah-pack. Before him was the larger number of the *eta*, but before him was also the temple.

The temple meant priests; more than that, there would be a little army of servants and temple-sweepers and novices. Some of these, according to usual custom, would be retired wrestlers, men unafraid of jackals like the pariahs. That the *eta* might seek him inside the temple troubled him none. Violation of the sacred boards of the floor would mean that the outcasts would be tracked to the most distant lair they could imagine.

The *eta*, Hastings believed, intended to ambush him when he departed from the temple after being lulled into false security. Well, he would not return along this or any other path alone.

It shouldn't be so terribly difficult to slip between the pariahs, who did not expect him to follow them toward the temple, and so attain safety. Once inside, he need fear no more.

He knew that he dared not remain where he was, that every added moment meant that some of the band might find him. Very slowly, with exquisite caution, he started up the rock path.

The outer gate of the temple was a beam of mountain ash, peeled and blackened with age, and placed across the path. Its supports were the sides of the chasm, and the stream thundered under it beside the path. Beyond the crude undecorated gate, Hastings saw a little flat studded with underbrush and stunted, untrimmed pines. Blocking the way squarely from side to side was the temple.

Hastings paused, hidden by the curve in the groove-like way. He could see the temple plainly, but not past it.

The fish-peaks caught fire-color from the flaring sunset, the upper outlines of the temple seemed to tremble with curious delight. A gilded animal glittered, a bird's wings were changed to brassy gold.

Hastings' eyes went upward.

The clouds were dazzling orange, burned crimson on the outer edges. As he looked they seemed to take on the fierce gray of fire, without losing any of their glare.

The white man thought as he had many times before:

"There aren't any other sunsets like those in the Orient. If a fellow didn't know, he'd swear that there was a fire. . . ."

For another second he watched the wizard-rose above him. Then, with a sigh, he dropped to his hands and knees.

In that way he crawled into the open.

He worked his way from bush to bush. Once he stopped and took the *eta's* knife from his pocket, thrusting the sharp, thin blade through his coat-lapel, where he could seize it swiftly. In the dimming light every far bush became a pariah, and he did not wriggle from one to the other, always toward the wall of the temple, until he determined the shape for what it was.

The door of the temple, carven above with the *sori-bashi*, the floating bridge of heaven, was open, although it was perfectly dark inside. As Hastings came to the side of the temple, rose, and faced it he saw two of the pariahs emerge.

His heart stood still before he heard one of them say:

"*Sore ni soi nai!* There is no mistake about it! He is inside. It will take time to go all over the temple. But in a dozen minutes—"

Hastings knew that the temple was deserted.

AS HE stood with the lengthwise ash logs pressed close to his body he heard the other pariah say:

"*Mah!* Do not all of those gods frighten you, Okira? That one with the big belly, he is a god out of hell!"

"There are no gods in hell," Okira objected. "*Those* are goddesses. Women are not the equal of men in anything; a god is in heaven, but a goddess lives in hell with the demons. Why, a man told me once—"

"The image looked like a man," the other suggested weakly.

"A beautiful woman, or a goddess for that matter, may be *kitsune** and we would never know the difference," Okira said angrily. "Besides, fool, it is not good for us to be talking about gods. I—I am a little afraid of this place. I am indeed. I heard a story about this temple of the Fourth Valorous Samurai which proved to me that—

"What—*what was that?*"

No more than Hastings' foot against a tiny pile of pebbles; the white man, in retreating, had shoved foot after foot in an effort to both reach the corner of the temple and still watch the two speakers.

"A—a demon, Okira?"

Okira did not answer.

Since the sound was not repeated, the *eta* said:

"Some one in the temple knocked over some object or other." Then, more loudly, "It must have been just that thing. Come. Mamatsu said we were to search in the bushes, and go clear around the temple. We had better do it. Merely because Mamatsu knows the name of the husband of his mother—or says he does, which is not the same thing—he is too ready to order us about."

Hastings waited no longer.

The white man dared not run openly, but, as fast as he could, he backed away to the side of the temple away from the door and the *eta*.

With walls between himself and the pariahs, he drew down a great gulp of air. His ears told him that he was near falling water although, in his anxiety to keep out of sight, that fact had hardly registered before.

He turned and looked.

A half-hundred feet from him water sheeted over a cliff, an abyss formed by the closing in of the two sides of the chasm. It was, he knew instantly, impossible to surmount; he guessed the height at near a hundred feet. Clear to the waterfall the sides of the ravine ran, straight, incredibly steep, without bush nor crack nor semblance of path. The rock, black, volcanic, was as smooth as an ice-crystal.

Above, clearly, Hastings could see the high colors of sunset, dropping down

* The fox-god.

through the well formed by cliffs, waterfall and temple like red rain. It was in no wise the color of blood; it was fiery. Even the sky, gray, was the peculiar color of rising smoke.

The water fell with a hissing sound and, after curling back in spray tinted to opalescence by the sunset, ran straight under the temple.

Hastings became suddenly beyond fright.

He heard the voice of the *eta* named Okira:

"*Shinda kodomo no shigoto.* These mounds are the work of the dead children. See, Yobashi; one of them has fallen. That ghost is in hell now."

And Okira's voice: "Which is where the *seiyo-jin's* will be as soon as he is found. *Koi!* Mamatsu will be angry at having to search for him."

The voices grew louder as Hastings listened. He looked once more at cliff and cataract, and knew he could never escape in either way. There was, then, but one thing to do—to circle the temple, risk the open door, and take the downward path again. The nearing voices of the two searchers hurried him on.

He was within a dozen paces of the great door when he heard men speaking loudly.

"He is not inside, or he is well hidden!"

"He must be inside. Some of you look again. Or he might be hidden under a bush."

"If he is, we will have him in moments. He can not fly, nor is he a goat. If he were a worm he might crawl into the ground, but he is not a worm either."

Hastings did not dare dash across the temple yard.

His heart was steadily rising to choke him; the blood at his wrists was throbbing until he thought his veins would break.

Once he looked around despairingly, and then, with no more than a lick of his lips, he turned to the temple.

Above the door was a broad piece of wood, carved, stout. Higher up the ancient log-wall were other bits of ornamentation—a dragon, a fish, the head and wings of a crane. Highest of all were the wide, broad eaves, held into place by thick V-shaped supports. It was impossible to reach them, but under the eaves was darkness, intensified by the high tones of the sky.

Hastings tried to scale the wall. His fingernails tore off and blood wet the tips. Four of the crevices he could manage with his toes, but the fifth eluded him; no finger could intrude between the tight logs. He tried again, his knees pressed grimly against the logs. He could hear voices at the very door—men arguing, discussing how best to search the grounds.

With trembling fingers the white man stooped and worked at the laces of his shoes. Water from the stream had tightened the knots. His aching fingers refused to loosen the thongs.

He tore at the heels of the shoes, but could not pull them from his feet.

Last of all he remembered the knife. It took him but an instant to slash the shoe-strings and pull off the offending boots.

With the knife still in his hand he tried to scale the rough wall again; in a fit of anger he drove the knife deep into the old boards high above his head. It stuck. It bore his weight. Helped by the toe-holds he managed—a reaching hand found the overhang of the door, and he was on it.

He lay at full length until Okira and the second *eta* rounded the corner, and joined the arguing pariahs just inside the temple. While they were directly under him he tried to stop breathing. It seemed as if his lungs exhaled air with the explosive noise of a minute-gun.

For a moment longer Hastings hesitated, gathering both courage and strength.

The water of the cataract, still visible to him, danced like the swaying sleeves of a *ne-san;* each unevenness in the rock beneath made a whipping silk sheet of blue flame. For that moment, while he paused, he clutched convulsively at the edge of the timber. He was almost beyond thought. He had come, or would,

when he reached the eaves—if he was able to reach them—to a passage completely blocked. If the *eta* saw him there, on his way up, there was but one possible ending for him. He shook the idea away. If he was to gain even that doubtful security he must do it rapidly.

The Asiatic-Import, the gold tied to his belt, the States, people he knew—everything was a long way off now.

Up he went.

First to the protruding figure of the winged dragon, then, with greater effort, to raise himself erect, his toes always against the side of the temple, and to pull himself slowly to the wooden head of the stork. The bird squawked as the ancient wood protested. Up again the white man went.

He was forced to lean far to the left now; a wide point in a running ledge, all carved with apricots and flowers and strange symbols, gave him better than a finger-hold. He did not see how he might stand on it, once he pulled himself up.

Toes still on the crane's head, fingers to the ledge, he stopped. *Eta* had swarmed out of the door below.

In that position, head aswim, eyes dazzled by the brilliant water of the cataract opposite, he waited.

He could hear, at last, men calling to one another. They were, he learned, tearing out bushes, crawling under those too large to be uprooted.

With a new weariness and renewed fear he slowly pulled himself to the ledge far enough to secure a hold with his elbows. He did not need to search for the knife. It was stuck in the wall far below him, for, he thought bitterly, the first searching pariah to find. They would see him—an image not recorded in any of the Forty-three Books—like a bird nesting on the temple's wall, and as easily brought down.

How he managed to stand on the ledge he never could tell; stand he did, and pull himself still higher by a false eave, which, for a moment, gave him the fainting sense of escape.

The true eaves were just above him now, but, when he reached for their supports, he found that his sense of distance was gone, and that he must first draw his body to another figure—the naked torso of a forgotten god, gilded, supplied with seven hands. And then the supports of the eaves.

The tiles of the roof extended far over him. He could see below, but never above. The sunset was shut out, but the reflection of it made the spray at the foot of the waterfall like the bodies of leaping gold-fish.

Slowly Hastings dragged a leg around one of the supports of the eave, and then his body after it.

A cry below him froze his weary body into a gargoyle as motionless as any of the wooden ones on either side of him.

One of the *eta* had found the knife.

"It—Katako—"

The noise of waterfall edged out all save the words of high pitch.

Hastings moved no muscle, although his eyelids, despite his effort, twitched unceasingly.

He did not move his head; he was, he supposed, half-fascinated by the sight of the falling water. Whether or not the *eta* looked up he did not know but, after continued argument in which one of the Japanese expressed unpleasant opinion of Mamatsu the leader, they went back to their search again. He could hear them beating in the bushes.

How long it was before the *eta*, all at once, hurried back into the temple was something the white man could not determine. He was not even sure that all of them went; he was almost past caring what happened.

The temple yard was still light with the long sunset of the East; Hastings began to hope that once it became dark the pariahs would scurry for their holes again, or stay where they were or—he did not know. The idea came to him that if he threw down the sack of gold they might take it and leave.

For minutes he mulled over the notion. Even if the *eta* tried to come up after him he could fight them off with hands and

feet. Unless they chopped a hole in the roof, first removing the ancient tiles.

He had kept the money. He might retain his life. For the first time the value of the adventure as an adventure occurred to him. What a story it would make if he decided to go down to Yoko for the holidays.

Hastings was weaker than he thought. He steadied himself against his support, and a new, awful intuition of danger possessed him. The very presence of the danger gave him strength.

PARIAHS, laughing and shouting, had rushed from the door of the temple; in their midst was Mamatsu and the others surrounded him with every evidence of satisfaction. Before the last of the *eta* were dancing in the temple-yard, the first wisps of yellowish-gray smoke floated out of the door.

Premonition changed to realization. Hastings understood that the ancient wood would burn easily, up to the very last gargoyle. The last real one and the only human one.

He would die here. . . .

If only he had gone back along the path! He might have managed to elude the guarding *eta*. Anything was better than roasting alive. If it came to that he would wait until some of the outcasts were directly under him and hurl himself down on top of them.

As the smoke grew more dense and a dragonlike tongue licked out a moment from the door, only to be driven inward by the draught, Hastings wanted to cry—

"Go find the two I killed!"

He lifted himself forward, almost to the edge of the eaves. Life was sweet; at the sight of cliffs, cataract, pariahs, a vast self-pity surged over him. Well, he had done his best, he supposed. There was nothing he could do now save die.

A gust of smoke blew upward at him, and he raised his head to escape it.

How red the sky was—red, smoky, intense!

Instantaneous with the sudden hope that the fire might be seen over the side of the ravine, in the village of Izamako, came knowledge that the smoke, the later flames, would blend into the vermilions and furnace-colors of the sunset. Hastings choked down terror; panic rose to tremble in the joints of his knees.

Little smoke came out of the door, and he knew that the fire was eating inward, upward; that the walls would be the last to burn, or at least the wall rising over the door.

He must give it all up. He wasn't going to whine. He'd die, if he must, game. It wouldn't be as easy to burn to death as it would to be stabbed. He wondered, with the fever of exhaustion, if it would hurt much to hurl himself downward to the ground. The pariahs would never come close to the temple now; they were, of course, waiting to see the figure of a white man smoked out.

Not that—he would never be alive. He would cling to his post as long as he could.

The *eta* were dancing a monkey-dance below him. What he could see of their faces showed him nothing human.

Hastings looked toward the next eave-support; it was a full ten feet away and under it were no ornaments, no possible finger-holds. To circle the building and escape from the far side wasn't humanly feasible; it couldn't be done save by a bat.

He pushed out along the support until he was able to touch the eave's edge. Before he had any weight to the tiles two broke off at once, dropping with a clatter to the ground. Hastings cowered back into the shadowed shelter next to the wall again.

No getting to the roof.

How cool the water of the falls looked! If some god of the temple would only send the icy spray over the temple, and into it, as revenge for the *eta's* sacrilege! Hastings wondered, with the idleness of defeat from all points, what the god or gods of the temple were.

Inside the temple was a roaring which steadily beat the sound of falling water from the white man's ears.

He closed his eyes and seemed to feel the log-wall grow warmer, hot. There

was a chance that he might be able to jump when the fire increased. The *eta*, watching the door, might not see him, and, like a hurt dog, he might be able to crawl away, even if a leg were broken.

It came to him then that he would like to die instantly. If he were injured he would never be able to crawl the few scant miles to the village.

Well, if he had to die, he'd like to do it without seeing the devil-dance of the *eta*. His hand went to his belt. Before he went he'd fling the sack into the waterfall, the *eta* would never find it there.

He supposed that he was going mad; the idea of cheating the pariahs out of the thing they most wanted was pleasing to him.

Cracks and crevices in the ancient structure were sending out little streamers of smoke, which rose swiftly out of the ravine, floating high out of its funnel. The sky, Hastings knew, would remain red, orange, gray until night dropped a snuffer over the flame of sunset. The smoke would never be seen.

Over the screams of the excited pariahs, over the rumble of fire within the temple and the sibilance of the waterfall, Hastings heard a new sound—a fierce, sudden, prolonged hiss, vastly more spiteful and compelling than the sound of the moving water. He was unable to determine what the new sound was. It stopped.

Hastings gradually lost track of time, of everything else. He clung to his support. He stiffened, grew rigid. Once he stirred. There seemed to be a second of the hissing sounds, enormous enough to wake him to consciousness of his situation, a sound like the scream of steam. Hastings half opened his eyes, and thought he was in a mist, a fog, but one which was scorchingly hot— Well, what difference did it all make?

It did not disappear, this mist, and the white man closed his eyes again. The building would collapse soon, and with it his wall. He would go with it and then let the pariahs find what was left, if they could. He no longer remembered clearly his decision to throw the little bag of gold into the water at the cataract's base.

What a glorious blaze the temple must be making! On the far side the smoke and flames must be fighting out under the tiles; perhaps the naked gods were having their mustaches burned away!

A second sound made him stir. He thought that he heard the single beat of a bell, tremendous in sound, with an echo that rang brazenly above all other noises —*bong!*—silence. Then the blue-white fog again, hotter than before.

Where was it that he had heard that a temple-bell could be rung by unseen hands? Ise? No. Osaka? No, not Osaka. What difference did it make where he had heard it?

Bong! Even with his eyes closed, and his ears unhearing, the sound seemed to pulse through him.

The *eta* could be seen only through a veil of smoke, even had Hastings' eyes been open. They no longer danced; they looked queerly at the blazing temple named for the bravest of the Samurai. There was, they whispered, something of the devil about the business. Would the *seiyo-jin* stay inside unless some god were protecting him?

It was uncanny.

The pariahs would have fled if Mamatsu had not restrained them, at first with words, and finally with the example of one of their number stretched on the ground with a hole in him large enough to hold a bag of rice, or a sake-bottle at least.

Hastings' fingers seemed to be freezing. The fog must have turned cold. Perhaps he was back in San Francisco again. He did not know, nor did he care. There was no sound nor succession of sound sufficient to rouse him from his lethargy. Like a condemned man placed in the death cell for his final night, he was prepared to die and nothing else mattered. He would have the laugh on the *eta*.

His eyes were closed, his brain shut to any sensation.

He no longer knew whether the pariahs danced or the fire burned or the water cascaded over the cliff. He did

not even realize that he had taken the money-bag from his belt, accustomed fingers releasing the loops, and thrown it away from him. Not toward the water, but merely away. What reason was left believed that the gold was in the water at the foot of the cascade.

WHAT next he knew was that something was touching him—his hand first, and then his arm. Something warm, like a tendril of smoke, yet clinging like a fiery grape-vine.

"*Danna-san! Danna-san!*"

Reiterated words drove the haze partially from him. He drew back his hand and made of it a fist.

"No! I am no *eta!* They are gone—those who are alive. Come, *danna-san!* The walls are about to fall. I can help you down, but I can not carry you. Come!"

Hastings said hoarsely in English:

"Let th' —— walls fall."

He did not move until the excited villager dragged him away from the support under the eaves.

The next the thing the white man remembered—although the story of the descent is told many times in Izamako—was after he was on the ground. His face was wet with icy water and his hair dripped chilly streams over his eyes.

He sat up then.

Sanity was with him. It was as if a giant hand had brushed away the haze and fog. He knew instantly that the temple was still burning, and that the sky was still red with the last of the sunset; he knew also that the men gathered around him were no pariahs. Their clean short blue jackets and eager, puzzled faces told him that.

Since none spoke, he said soberly—

"*Omaye no o kage de kinsu wo toarenai.*"

"It is more than money we saved you," a villager said. "If it had not been for that money, *danna-san*, we would never have seen you."

"I do not understand."

Talking was no easy matter. Hastings' eyes were dazed, blank, like those of a reprieved criminal.

"Tamaki here felt a rock hit him. It almost knocked him to the ground. And then, when he looked down, he saw that it was a little sack of silk, and that in the sack—it split, *danna-san*, but we have saved everything—in that sack was money, gold. Tamaki said—"

"I said that gold does not drop out of the sky, nor fall from a bird's mouth," Tamaki said quickly. "And so—"

"We all looked up—"

"Although the light—"

"The smoke, *danna-san*, and the sky—"

"Made us think you were only one of the wooden monkeys holding up the roof—"

"But some of the tiles were missing above you—"

"And he knew it was a man; the light showed on your face—"

Hastings tried to smile, and achieved a wan grimace.

"I owe you all more than I can—"

"There will be a reward," one of the villagers said happily. "The government will pay for these pigs we have caught. And it is a good thing, too; none of us have sold brocade for years, because none come to Izamako, and—"

Hastings smiled more naturally.

"We will remedy that," he said, and explained.

"Do you think you can walk now?" one of the men asked. "In my house I have some silk I myself wove, on a handloom, from long strands colored—"

"While I have a length of the heaviest—"

"My wife, *danna-san*, has fingers as soft as a mulberry-leaf and I will show you—"

"There is enough for all," Hastings said.

The villagers began to talk excitedly together: it was an event of greater importance than any save the day the emperor's second son came through Izamako—and that was in the days of their fathers.

"If you are ready, *danna-san*—"

Hastings was on his feet before he said sharply:

"How did you happen to come? I hoped some one in the village might see

the fire, but the sky was so red—so red and gray—"

"I do not know how long the temple was burning," the man answered quickly. "You were right. The sky is like fire this time of the year. It—see?—it is still red, like the coals of an *hibachi*. But a boy, Kutagawa's son, who has bright eyes, saw that there was something like a white cloud that none ever saw in the early evening. It was very white. The son called his father—"

The Japanese stopped.

The side wall trembled, swayed back and forth as if in a wind, and then fell almost straight on its foundations. A cloud of hissing steam shot high from where the blazing timbers had hit the stream flowing under the temple.

"You see?"

Hastings nodded silently.

"Kutagawa called to us in the village. We watched, and decided that it might be a rain-cloud, or that perhaps some strange affairs of the gods were going on in the temple. And then as we watched we heard the bell of the temple beat once, louder than any of us had ever heard it before. At almost the same moment there was another of the white clouds in the air, and so we ran as fast as we could—and that is all there is to it."

Hastings said thoughtfully:

"The beam holding up the bell must have burned through. When the bell was loosed it clanged, and when it fell it tore burning wood along with it clear down to the water—"

The Japanese looked curiously at the white man.

"The gods can tell you about that," he said at last.

While the *seiyo-jin* stood watching the remaining three walls crumble, the villagers waited patiently.

"It is all down now," one told him at last. "You are tired. Tonight you sleep, and tomorrow we will show you brocades finer than any in the north provinces."

The speaker turned to the others.

"Kick these lice to their feet," he said, indicating the wounded *eta*. "If they die on the way, it is no matter. They are worth as much to us dead as alive, and we will not need to feed them. *Mah!* When they offered to fight us I should have known there was a something in the air besides smoke. We all thought they burned the temple merely out of meanness." Aside to Hastings he said, "They are not hurt—much. One is dead, but we did not kill him."

"Two more are dead also," Hastings said slowly.

"I might have known a white man would not run until he had found the odds too heavy. Walk, sons of the gutter, or I will kill you all now and throw your bodies into the fire." He winked broadly at the white man. "I could kill you just for the appetite it would give me!"

Under the gate of the temple, where the rock-path began, Hastings turned. The sky had faded swiftly to the green of the upper mountain; a last glow, either from the temple or the vanished sun, fought to retain its own color against the first star.

"It's good to be alive," Hastings said. "I—I never knew just what living meant before."

"It is a thing we best understand when we are about to die. We have had no trouble with knives in Izamako, but since none wanted what we could make, we have been—" a pause, and then very simply—"hungry."

"It will be a long time before you are hungry again," the white man told him. He had been carrying the gold, unconsciously, in his hand. He shifted it now to his pocket.

He turned a second time. The sky was dark, the temple out of sight. The sky had instantly become lustrous black; no pin-point granulation of the faintest fire-color vied with the evening star.

It came to Hastings as he followed the villagers that the star was shining directly over the ruins of the temple.

Old

BY

EDGAR MIMS SIVLEY

TOM was far too old to be washing catsup-stained dishes in a fourth-class restaurant. His great-grandfather had been a man high in the politics behind the throne of England. Tom cast a tremulous glance about. Seeing himself unnoticed, he hastily snatched a half-eaten pork chop from a smeary plate and crammed it into the pocket of his loose trousers. Old Tom's grandfather had been a painter of pictures.

As the dishwasher hastily ran his hand back into the steaming vat of water, he knocked a plate against another. One broke. He instantly assumed a casual countenance. But his fingers trembled as he continued to work. Stealthily, piece by piece, he took out the fragments and rammed them deep down into the can of garbage beside him. His father had been a successful business man, noted and feared for his aggressive and courageous nature.

But Tom feared many things. He was most afraid that he would grow too old to work before he had saved enough to live on, and that he would have to spend his last days in some poorhouse.

By the time he had hidden the evidence of the broken dish, it was time for him to quit work. He washed his hands, put on his coat and passed out of the kitchen into the front part of the restaurant.

As he passed along the row of stools his foot struck something. He looked down and saw a half-open billfold. A roll of yellow bills was in plain sight. Thinking rapidly, he realized that the money must belong to the single customer who was eating on that side of the horseshoe counter. Tom made a decision. He dropped the hat he had been so obsequiously holding until he got out of the restaurant. He dropped it as if by accident, but it fell exactly over the folder.

When he straightened up the hat was still over the folder. But Tom's face was flushed with new life. Inside the hat he could see the crisp new bills. Nothing but fifties! He saw instantly that there was, to him at least, a small fortune there. He walked hurriedly out of the dirty restaurant, never to return.

The customer, too well-dressed and prosperous for such an eating place, continued to sip his coffee casually.

It was fully five minutes after Tom left the place when his eyes happened to fall upon his billfold. Instantly he leaped to his feet and snatched it up.

He gasped: "Gone! Gone—the money! Waiter, did you see anybody pass— Say! Snap out of it, will you! I've just been robbed. Lost an even thousand dollars!"

The waiter's eyes popped, then narrowed incredulously. People did not wander about dropping thousand-dollar bills on his floor.

"Oh, I had it all right. Brought it here for a man who works for you. Meant to ask for him later. A rich relative left him a hundred thousand dollars, and because we learned he was in bad circumstances, I brought a thousand dollars along as a loan until he could be given the whole thing. Our men located him here this morning. Tom Williams's his name."

"Say! That guy just left. Say! By ——! He stooped over right where that folder was! He got it."

The customer and the waiter looked into each other's eyes. A light of understanding dawned.

The waiter grinned.

"His own money. Say! That's rich! Now there's a guy that's getting the toughest break I ever saw! Imagine a guy spending the rest of his life dodging another guy who is trying to find him to give him a hundred thousand dollars!"

The humor of it grew upon him. He burst out in unrestrained laughter.

A Newcomer in The Boy

ALL England was aglow with the wild tales of sudden fortune from trade on the northwest coast of America. Seamen stopped to tell idlers on the Thames embankment and the waterfront of Hull how when Cook first coasted those almost unknown shores in the late 1770's the natives would dive like water-rats and with their teeth pull out loose nails and spikes in the jolly-boat's keel, and then toss up to the sailors on deck sea-otter skins for which the Chinese paid two hundred, yes, as much as eight hundred, in American dollars.

Cook's crew had almost traded themselves naked for these peltries and had come back so rich they were now out as shipmasters on their own account, sailing the swift Boston clippers under cloud of sails that could outrace and outpace the big, slow English navy craft or the high-hulled, ponderous Spanish caravels up from Mexico. These Boston clippers drew such shallow draught that they could cross the river bars, as Gray's did when he discovered the Columbia in 1792, or could skirt the inland passageway between the big islands and the mountain coast and not graze such reefs as almost ripped the bottom from Vancouver's keels.

One generation goes mad over quick fortune from gold; another over easy money from oils. This was the age of furs. The beaver had led canoes a merry chase from the St. Lawrence to the Pacific from 1535 to 1793. Now the sea-otter was to lead another kind of frenzied race over silver trails around the world on chartless seas.

Gold mines pinch out. So might fortunes from furs. When a handful of rusty iron nails would buy an eight-hundred-dollar sea-otter pelt any fool could guess sea-otter would not last. Those to reap the golden harvest of the sea must be first on the field. Late comers would glean but a scant aftermath; and all England was delirious with the stories of quick fortune from that far field of adventure and daring in a no man's land.

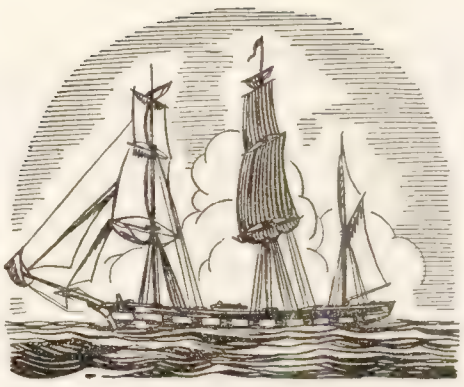
What mattered the toll of life taken by the sea, the terrible roster of vessels that breasted the wild gales round the Horn and went careening up the West Coast never to be registered again among ships that go to sea? When fortune beckoned with one hand and adventure with the other, what youth with quickened pulse paused to take count of risks? What boy ever reflected that his hero Crusoe must have suffered from hunger and nakedness and cold and desolating lonely despair at times when he would gladly have thanked God to lie down and die?

A YOUTH lay dreaming on the sunny sands of the waterfront at Hull. Hull was a perilous place for any boy to do two things at once, to dream of fortune

to our pages

AGNES C. LAUT

John Jewitt



and keep a steady head. It was at Hull that Cook had risen from poor lad to roustabout, longshoreman, common sailor, then to one of the greatest navigators the world had known. With Cook around the world had gone that Kendrick whose ship under Gray found the Columbia, and those two young officers—Portlock and Dixon—who later on ships of their own had cleared fifty-four thousand dollars in a single voyage, and the young middy Vancouver, who a few years later had cruised the northwest coast of America and received back from Señor Don Quadra, the chivalrous, courtly officer of Spain, the property seized from that English freebooter Meares. Cook's "Voyages" and Vancouver's accounts of his travels had been eagerly read by the seafaring folk of Hull, as an earlier generation had devoured the tales of Crusoe.

Vancouver's "Voyages" had come out in 1779, and this was 1802. Who in Hull did not remember the scenes describing Maquina, the great chief of the Nootka Indians, as he welcomed Cook with two thousand warriors? On Vancouver's visit when the English commander was in formal and solemn conclave with Don Quadra, Maquina came scrabbling up the ship's ladder clad in the garb of his birth, to be cuffed into the sea by the naval officers on guard, and when the mistake was discovered of offended Indian dignity, Vancouver and Quadra vied to make amends by a feast to the Indian Tyee—a five-course dinner served on silver plate, with the two marine bands playing and Maquina and his wife and sister sitting in state by the side of the two great commanders.

Don't forget that wife and sister of Maquina's. You will meet them both again. The wife was the daughter of Wicanish, chief of the Clayoquots to the south, and the sister had married a terrible killer chief to the east, Tootoosh, who ranged from the Fraser to the Columbia. You will meet him, too, presently. Don't forget his name. You will witness his perishing,under conditions more ghostly and tragic than ever conjured up for film or romance.

Vancouver's men had danced Scotch reels with Maquina's tribe on the decks of the English war vessels; and Don Quadra's sailors had paced majestic fandangos on the decks of the Spanish ships. Not to be outdone, Maquina had given a mask-dance in his village, attended by two thousand warriors. Disgruntled dignity had been appeased, if not drowned, in Spanish wines and Jamaica gin, with presents of plumed hat 'broidered in gold braid and naval coat bespattered with gold buttons.

The boy lying dreaming on the sands of Hull knew all these stories as boys today know of George Washington's hatchet. The boy's name was John Jewitt, and he

was barely nineteen. All the old sailor yarns of those years back had been vividly recalled on this beautiful August day, by the visit to his father's blacksmith shop of Captain Salter of the ship *Boston*, a Yankee clipper outfitting for the northwest coast of America. In the *Boston's* crew was Jupiter, the Senegal from South Africa, John Thompson the sail-maker, a boxer and prize-fighter from Philadelphia, and a youth, William Ingraham, from New York. He was of John Jewitt's own age, and was son of the Ingraham who had been with Cook and with Gray and who was now sailing a ship of his own, the *Hope*, on the west coast of America.

There is a nice point here, too, for believers in destiny to con over. On Gray's first voyage on the *Lady Washington* was a brave Coolidge mate, whose cool head had saved the ship's crew from pirate Indian attack off Gray's Harbor. At Washington today is a collateral descendant of that same Coolidge clan; and this boy Jewitt of 1802 was later to encounter that same Coolidge of Gray's crew.

Into the eager ears of John Jewitt these Yankee seamen poured their thrilling tales of adventure, surpassing any Crusoe romance ever written. John Jewitt liked these bluff salts from Yankee-land, in spite of their plain blue garb with brass buttons, so drab in comparison with the gold and silver braided slashed doublets of the officers on the great English men o'war. These Yankee or Boston men moved freely, met people easily, talked as man to man. They were not impressed seamen. They were not mongrel underlings ruled by fear of being lashed to the wheel and flogged. They were apprentices, sons of the Boston merchants who had outfitted the clipper to plow the seas. They earned almost four hundred dollars a year and keep, much more than the English wage of one hundred dollars, and they were permitted to trade in furs on their own account. There could be no mutiny on these Boston ships, for every man was a partner.

The blacksmith shop of John Jewitt's father was not the humble horseshoeing shop we know under that name. "The smith was a mighty man of valor." We would call him an iron forger. He resheathed with copper or iron the prows of the vessels and the keel beams of their jolly-boats. It was his business, too, to strengthen the flukes of the ponderous anchors, to sharpen the barbs of the whale harpoons, to transform iron sheets into knives and swords and daggers and balls, and to use the waste scraps to mend the thousands of old muskets bought from the European wars for the northwest Indian trade.

And this week young Jewitt, stripped to the waist, toiled with the fury of a demon incarnate behind the big bellows and flame and anvil. Captain Salter of the *Boston* used to stand watching him.

"Why such fury, lad?"

"Because I can not abide the professions!"

In that answer lay the heartbreak of John's parents.

The Jewitts were prosperous folk and wanted their son to rise in life. Surveying, mathematics, astronomy, navigation, he ate up as a hound crunches bone; but Latin he abominated. Though he sang like a seraph in the cathedral choir and there met all the best sons of the neighborhood—and doubtless borrowed their books of Cook and Vancouver—into holy orders John Jewitt refused to go, averring he stammered when he was nervous. And when his father apprenticed him to a surgeon, the boy rebelled against the smell of putrid flesh and mouldy skeletons.

He had forced himself into his father's shop and had made good by inventing some rare devices for the Yankee ships, such as a little workshop with bench and anvil in the hold for use in bad weather to supplement the big anvil on deck; thus the ship's armorer could fit blades to handles and repair old war muskets as the vessel cruised the long voyage around half the world.

Captain Salter and young Ingraham and the boxer, John Thompson, used to come up to his father's house, where young Jewitt would sing to them while

his stepmother or sister played the harpsichord. Somehow those songs would always run from church chants to sailor chanteys of Davy Jones' locker, in which the *Boston* men would join.

There are more ways of catching a good seaman than impressing him, or of catching a fish than harpooning it.

Into the hold John Jewitt had seen trundled cases of blankets, looking-glasses, beads, knives, razors, daggers, swords, pistols, three thousand old army muskets, casks of wine, twenty hogsheads of rum from Holland. Now, in September, the ship was all but ready for sea and would sail in a few days with other Yankee vessels which, having sold American tobacco and wool and fish in England, carried the new cargoes for barter in furs to the no man's land of the Pacific Northwest, traded the furs in China for silk and nankeens and teas and spices, brought the Asiatic cargo to Boston and Philadelphia and New York, and again and again belted the globe in the same circuit —with a profit in trade running to colossal gains.

Watching the boy at his anvil that day, Captain Salter had said—

"John, how would you like to go to sea with me?"

How would he like? John's ears were pounding and his stammering lips could not answer. Wasn't that what he had been hoping and praying and passionately wishing beyond anything he had wanted all his life?

"I want an expert smith for an armorer. I'll pay you thirty dollars a month and keep, and if you have any savings you can put them in the trade. I think I'll be able to set you up for yourself in Boston—"

"My father will never let me go."

"If I persuade him, will you go?"

Would he? John Jewitt could have shouted.

And this evening, when John was down on the sea sands dreaming in an agony of hope, Captain Salter of the *Boston* was up at the house persuading Jewitt's father to consent. The boy could hear the sailors on the Yankee clippers singing their chanteys as they ran round the capstan bars. He could see the naked mast-arms heaving to the tide. He rose and, hardly hoping, plodded home.

It needed but one look at his father's face when John came in to know that the Boston captain had won. The father could hardly speak for the deep emotion that shook his frame. There is something unspeakably touching in an old man's farewell words. Jewitt presented the boy with a little writing-desk to put in his seaman's chest, and in the little old square writing-desk, no larger than a small box, was a Bible, an English church prayer book, an account book, an almanac and the money John had acquired by working for his father.

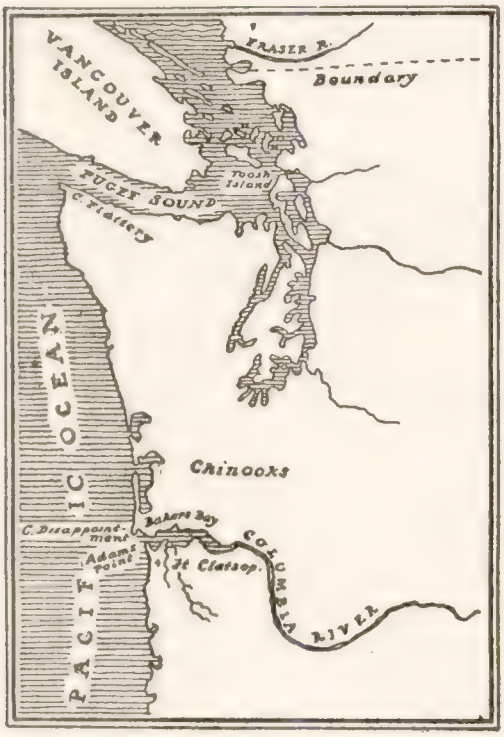
"John, be honest! Be frugal! Be clean! Be upright! Remember you have a mother and a sister! Never do aught to make them blush with shame! Read the Bible every day! Trust God, no matter what the trouble! He will never desert those who trust Him!"

EYES dim with tears, hope a phantom through the mist of those tears, out to sea, out to destiny, out to the great adventure of life sailed John Jewitt, September 3, 1802, aboard the *Boston*, with twenty-four other American vessels bound for ports in all the seas of the world.

Observe the warp and the woof in the shuttle of the Norns! John Jewitt could not know that a great American statesman was just concluding negotiations for the purchase of all Louisiana from New Orleans to the Rockies, was planning in great secrecy and haste an expedition for the Pacific to outrace the English and Spanish for possession of the no man's land between California and the Russian settlements of Alaska. Yet that great international warp and woof of the destinies was to crisscross the boy's insignificant life-thread and almost break his heart.

Because they could outrace the ponderous Spanish and English men o' war, the Boston clippers carried neither such

numerous crews nor such large stores of food. The *Boston* mustered only twenty-seven men, but each was a hand-picked partner. Of course, the landlubbers were horribly seasick for a few days, but every man was busy on his own job—the tailor mending seamen's clothes, the sail-maker sewing extra canvas for the big blow likely to tear sails to tatters down round the



Horn, the armorer, John Jewitt, hammering out spikes from iron sheets, sharpening daggers, mending old muskets, casting bullets and cannon balls. So the dolors of the sea were soon forgotten, and every green horn was ducked as the *Boston* crossed the Equator.

The mountain billows made young John Jewitt gasp; but the *Boston* rode them like a sea-gull, and Captain Salter was a kind sea-master. Every Saturday the crew got out fiddles and concertinas and mouth-organs and danced the hornpipe. Every Sunday the church service was read and sung, with the Hull boy leading as he had at home. A month only the swift clipper took to reach Brazil where pause was made to take on bananas and limes, oranges and lemons to prevent scurvy; but they were three months rounding the Horn from Brazil and thirty-six days held back by the wild green seas, emerging to the Pacific on Christmas Day, which was celebrated by sacred service, then with concert and song and feast.

Jewitt's log says nothing about Crusoe's Island of Juan Ferñandez, but they must have stopped here somewhere, for the Yankee clippers all took on fresh water, fruits and wood on Crusoe's Island to go on up the Pacific. Jewitt may have seen the lone Englishman whom the Spanish kept as guardian of the famous isle proudly playing the part of a second Crusoe and giving to the passing ships those peach and orange and lemon seeds from which the first orchards of the Pacific States map grew.

The Pacific did not belie its name. It lay a floor of glass with a gentle swell from the south wind that wafted the *Boston* on her way for the first fourteen days of 1803 without reefing a top sail or tacking off course a mile. It was like a magic voyage over a magic sea into a realm of dreams come true. Only two signs set the older seamen gossiping superstitions of ill luck —the "porps" went racing round the ship in shoals and birds dipped so close to the decks that Captain Salter shot an albatross with wing measurement of fifteen feet from tip to tip.

"Bad luck—bad luck to do that," one can hear the old salts' comment.

You can hear it today when the porpoise turn somersaults around a ship or an albatross dies on deck.

"Bad luck nothing! Out with your harpoons, men, and catch a porp or a shark!" the captain scoffed, and they dined for a week on porpoise or herring hog that tasted sweet as corn-fed pork.

All the same the captain may have taken cognizance of both signs of foul weather ahead. He knew the northwest coast bulged out toward the north like the large end of a ham and, sheering

away from the dangers between a bad blow and rocky coast, he kept to the open sea. When the gale did come up with a roar from the south, it only carried the *Boston* the swifter. She held off from the Columbia and Cape Disappointment, which the freebooter Meares had named because he could not find the Great River of the West, but saw that Cape Flattery where Cook had failed to locate the old Juan de Fuca Straits.

But somewhere before going on up to Alaskan waters the *Boston* must pause again to fill fresh-water casks and buy fresh salmon and repair masts and spars rotted and split in the tempests of the Horn. So the watch was sent scrambling up the main mast to the crow's-nest, the little barrel with a platform bottom, to try to sight Nootka harbor on the west side of Vancouver's big island. This was where Cook had made his first landfall; where Meares the freebooter had built his fort; where Martinez the Spaniard had seized Meares' vessel; where Don Quadra and Vancouver had come out to settle the quarrel between England and Spain by abandoning all fortifications and restoring all Nootka to Chief Maquina as a no man's land open to all vessels as a roadstead.

"Much your English braggart Meares paid for his land!" remarked young Ingraham, whose kin had been out with both Cook and Gray. "Two old pistols for Hog Island for his forts."

"And much your Yankee Gray paid for his—some sheets of copper for site for his winter fort," retorted an Englishman.

"And how much did the Spaniard Martinez pay?" asks John Jewitt.

Young Ingraham laughed.

"What did Martinez pay? Rum and cannon ball to sink Maquina's dugouts if they didn't hand up their sea-otter."

"Then why did the Indian king love Don Quadra?" asked John Jewitt, thinking of those voyages whose narratives he had conned in Hull.

"Honeyed words, gracious manners, silver braid, plumes on their hats, gold on their velvet capes, satin breeches, waxed mustachios! The English wore only the little Napoleon hats with short wig and clean shave, and their rank and file of sailors were a bob-tail rabble. Man, Maquina has worn a waxed mustache in imitation of the Spaniards ever since! Bad example I've heard my folks say," adds young Ingraham, "for the Indians to see the white men here seizing one another's vessels. Lost the fear of white men and got the idea they could seize vessels, too! Dangerous place ever since. Fewer ships here every year—"

"Because the best furs are farther north," interrupted the captain, "and that's where we'll be's fast as we can wood and water. Only one sail seen from the Horn. Either no ships are out yet or they are all up North. Not a day to lose!"

Snap and fire had come into the voice of the easy-going Yankee captain. He was now a commander with nerves a hair-trigger for danger, and John Jewitt noted the signs.

March 12, 1803, just as daylight was fading, the crow's-nest sighted the forest-clad heights of Nootka and the Hull boy beheld the fairy land of his dreams rise like a mirage from the silver-blue sea. What wonder this realm went to men's heads with dizzy hopes and wild abandon to a new life?

Vancouver was not an island. It was a small continent, and wedged against it was Nootka, a triangular islet, with safe roadstead from storms for twenty miles up the narrows, where a river poured down from the great forested mountains. Ships could go in with the tide, moor to a huge tree and warp up. As the tide fell they would settle on the clean sand to have hulls scraped of barnacles, the copper linings to the hull repaired and seams recaulked. Trees from the forests, tall and straight as poles, made new masts. Casks were filled with fresh water, and trinkets were traded for fresh salmon.

The *Boston* passed that Hog Island where Don Quadra and Vancouver had danced the fandango with Maquina's numerous wives. Nothing of the old fort left now—the Indians had carried off all

slabs and boards for their long houses cresting the darkening ridge behind the island. There was only the old fort garden grown rank with the turnips and onions and carrots and peas planted many years ago. Past that Friendly Cove which had proved so perilous long ago, up with the night tide the *Boston* drifted and came to anchor on sandy bottom, where she moored at midnight the 12th of March by roping a big hawser to a tree. Not an Indian had appeared on the dark ridge to the left. Maquina's village was fast asleep and the clipper had glided past silent as a ghost.

Far different was the scene at daydawn. Jewitt was up with the birds to see the land of his dreams. Sea-gulls dipped and dived and fought for the scraps thrown out by the black Virginia cook and his kitchen boy, Jupiter Senegal. The big trees growing down to the very water edge were of a girth the English lad could hardly credit. Some stumps of firs and spruce were wide as a family dining-table. Cedars drooped their plumy branches in great ferns that met other ferns coming up from the dank mold high as a man's shoulders. Where the plated bark had split and peeled he could see the stringy, softer inner brown bark from which the Indians wove their waterproof little hats, like pannikins, and shirts and sandals and cooking utensils. Cypress, cinnamon-tinted and clean of bole, hung over the water with gnarled roots looking for all the world like coils of water snakes washed by the waves.

But the mountains edging the sky-line! The highest mountain he had ever seen at home would not make a footstool to these snow-crested peaks with waterfalls pouring over precipices in wind-blown spray. And the air, with its tang of the sea and cinnamon scent of the forests and the cold clear nip of the snows, was a wine of new life. Why, all England wasn't more than a third larger than this big island! The boy gasped at the immensity of that land to which he had adventured.

But Jewitt's cogitations were interrupted by the approaching apparition of the strangest watercraft he had ever seen in his life.

The Indians used neither boats nor canoes. They were long, narrow, high-prowed dugouts, hollowed by adze or fire, and sandpapered in some way so that they were black and shiny as lava rock. On the sides of the seamless craft were painted red and blue designs of bizarre animal and fish and monster. Prow and stern lifted high in wild carvings. The dugouts were almost proof against reef or wind, though they could be penetrated by cannon ball. That was how Meares the Englishman and Martinez the Spaniard used to get their furs. Each could carry twenty and forty men, who paddled in a fashion the boy had never seen—a three-flip on one side, then a three-flip on the other, which gave the craft a sort of galloping jump over the waters. The Indians paddled in rhythmic time to a chant of *ti-ai-ai-ai* sung together by all.

As they came over the tide to the ship's side Jewitt recognized the kingly figure of old Maquina, the chief, who had ruled these people like a Roman despot from Cook's day. His strong Roman nose, his thin mustache, his painted moon-shaped brows, his red-painted cheeks and blue-tattooed arms and pot-shaped woven cedar hat, the magnificent sea-otter cloak slung over his shoulders, the moose-skin undershirt belted in by a sash worked in gold and yellow porcupine quills—all were exactly as voyagers had for twenty years described him.

Despite his sixty years, the chief came up the ship's ladder agile as a cat and grand as a savage king—such a king perhaps as ruled in England, garbed in wild-beast skins, when the Romans had crossed from Gaul. Maquina could speak a few words of both Spanish and English, but what the *Boston* crew apparently forgot was that he understood every word spoken in English. Captain Salter welcomed the chief on board and at once led the way to the cabin for a glass of rum.

The crew spent the next two days scraping the hull and filling water casks. There were few furs to delay them in

Nootka. The Indians brought fresh salmon for trade, and Maquina used to watch John at the deck anvil repairing copper sheaths and muskets and pistols. He may have said "Wocash"—the Sioux of the plains call it "Washte"—"Good-good"—but his immobile features betrayed not an inkling of what was going on in his cunning brain. He used to watch Thompson the sail-maker and no doubt thought his own thoughts when he heard the ex-pugilist wishing all the cursed pagans dead. Aye! Aye! Many of the traders had wished Maquina dead these twenty-five years they had known him, but their bones bleached in the bottom of the sea and the old chief was still here.

By the 15th, all the chiefs were coming freely to the ship and Captain Salter had them throw back fur cloaks to see there were no concealed weapons. To compensate for his evident suspicion, the captain of the *Boston* invited all the chiefs to a dinner and presented Maquina with a magnificent double-barreled shotgun. Maquina reciprocated with a return gift of wild duck and invited the crew to go ashore and shoot in the fresh-water pond behind the ridge.

It was on the 21st that Maquina came back to the ship with the double-barreled shotgun badly broken, saying—

"*Peshak—peshak!*"*

Now "bad" to an Indian does not imply wrong. It may mean that an instrument does not work, and these Indians had not yet learned how to handle white man firearms. They would not hold the gun close to shoulder for fear of the back kick—and so usually got a back kick violent enough to dislocate a shoulder. Ordinarily, they braced the gun to a rock or tree before they fired. In such fashion, Maquina had broken the beautiful gift.

The captain, touchy as tinder at the implied slur, grabbed the gun from the chief with the words "old liar" under his breath and, tossing it to Jewitt, asked:

"John, can you mend this beautiful fowling piece? The old fool has smashed it."

*Bad—bad.

A French traveler, who long afterward asked the Indians about the quarrel, says that Captain Salter broke out in some terrific seaman's oaths.

Now the Indian kills and steals. Both are his life vocations; but he does not swear and he ordinarily does not lie.

Looking up from his deck anvil, Jewitt saw Maquina's eyes bulge out, then narrow to snaky slits. His face had purpled under the deep vermilion and the veins of his throat stood out as if to burst. He strode straight to the ship's ladder and led his chiefs off in silence. The white traders were all alike under their fair words—bullies who gave gifts to get back greater gifts.

Before the ships went out it was customary for the Indians to give a mask-dance, wishing the white men good speed in their trade. Maquina came across about noon of the 22nd and proposed they should give a mask-dance that night. He was all graciousness and gayety, and seemed to have forgotten the fit of sulks. The captain was disposed to let bygones be bygones, too.

"I dance here tonight. Why your men not go dance my village, too? Lots good fresh salmon, they get 'um," said the chief.

"Fine," said the captain. "You come on deck—my men go ashore."

He thought that with the chiefs and their families dancing on deck his men would be safe ashore. He forgot that he had only twenty-seven men to their five hundred warriors and fifteen hundred people. Maquina's plan would divide the white crew.

As the ship was to sail on the 23rd, John Jewitt and Thompson the sail-maker were below decks, busy as beavers on final repairs. The chiefs took evening dinner on board and the mate, young Ingraham, went ashore to fish with nine men. The steward, too, went ashore to gather the bedding and linen airing on the shrubs.

Below deck, Jewitt and Thompson heard the hollow beat of the dance drum—a hoop with dried walrus-skin stretched taut beaten by a stone gavel fastened to

a bone handle. He could hear the bells fastened to the feet of Maquina's little son as he started the dance. Then the castanets clicked and the rattles snapped and back astern sailors were hauling up on the davits the big jolly-boat, leaving only the other row boat of the sportsmen ashore to be hoisted up on their return.

Others of the crew were evidently letting slack the hawser tied to the tree, for the *Boston* was lifting to the tide and swaying only to the anchor. Please note that point. Through the port-holes came the shrill screaming laughter and clapping applause of the squaws, noisy and vociferous as the gulls, in the dugouts round the *Boston*. Please note that point, too! The squaws' presence usually signified peace. It didn't this time. Maquina was a master of wiles.

The stage had been carefully set for one of the most terrible and swift tragedies that ever took place on the Pacific coast. This was eight years before Astor's ship, the *Tonquin*, suffered like fate on the same coast.

Then to the *tai-ai-ai* of the beater of drums, shouting at the top of his lungs to lash the masked dancers to frenzy, the Indian performance began with the pounding of a hundred feet on the decks above. Then came a shrill whistle, followed by an ear-splitting shout in unison. Jewitt's mallet fell from his hands across the anvil below, Thompson the sail-maker pugilist sprang from his bench—for the Indian war-shout mingled with shots, blows, oaths, white men's screams!

Jewitt leaped for the steerage stairs but his head was hardly above the deck floor when he was caught by the hair and lifted from his feet. At this period hair was not shaved short, but was tied in a short knot behind with a ribbon. Before Jewitt could see what was ado, the ribbon had slipped. The savage hand lost its grip and the boy fell to the bottom of the steps, but not before a glancing blow from some weapon cut his head above the temple, drenching him blind with blood. His last consciousness was that the hatch door was being clamped down. Then darkness came. He had lost his senses.

It was Maquina who had slammed the hatch-way trap down and jumped on it to keep the Indians out of the hold.

This was on the evening of March 22, 1803.

Down in Washington the President was quietly perfecting plans to send Lewis and Clark from St. Louis across the Rockies to the mouth of that river which Gray had discovered in 1792.

JEWITT was aroused from what seemed a paralyzing nightmare of pain by the opening of the hatch and a shout from Maquina—

"John—come up,"

Groping up the darkening stairs, the boy, still blinded with blood, staggered to the deck.

Maquina ordered an Indian to bring a pot of warm water and wash the blood out of the boy's eyes. One eye was swollen shut, but with the other John saw enough to turn him faint. The six leading chiefs stood stark naked round him with blood-stained daggers in their hands. Faint and half stunned, Jewitt fell to his knees.

"John," said Maquina, "you say no, daggers! Be my slave—fight for me—mend muskets — make knives — swords? You say yes, live."

"Yes," gasped the boy, looking frantically round for the crew of the *Boston*.

There was no crew, only the red-dyed decks and the dugouts of the Indians circling the ship with wolfish yells of triumph.

"Kiss—my hands. Kiss—my feet," ordered Maquina.

Jewitt obeyed. The foot placed on his neck cemented the bond of white slave to savage chief.

Chattering with terror and cold, Jewitt could not rise, for he had been working at his anvil stripped to his shirt when the massacre took place, and now the night wind blew from the mountain snows sharp as ice. Maquina threw Captain Salter's greatcoat round the youth and forced the

neck of a wine bottle between the chattering teeth. Then he led him to the quarter-deck.

Where were the crew? Jewitt reeled.

There were the crew, twenty-five of them in line. The bodies were tossing on the red-stained heaving night tide, the battered heads were on the deck. In the glazing eyes shone horror at the massacre and fight and treacherous carnage.

"Whose head—this?" Tootoosh had held up a mutilated form.

It was Captain Salter's; and each head Jewitt had to name as Maquina demanded and Tootoosh held it up. All were there, including Ingraham, whose father was on this very coast, Jupiter Senegal the black African, Wilson the colored Virginian cook, all there but Thompson the pugilist sail-maker.

Maquina smiled, well satisfied with the results of the mask-dance. Then taking Jewitt's handkerchief from his neck, he bound up the gashed flesh on the boy's temple, with a big leaf of tobacco under the silk to prevent gangrene. A lad who could mend muskets and make iron into daggers was evidently one to be kept alive. But where was Thompson, who had been in the hold when the massacre began?

Maquina ordered Jewitt to show the Indians how to get the ship back down the Sound to that Friendly Cove and Hog Island where the tribe's village crested the ridge. The cables to the tree were cut, the anchor was hoisted and Jewitt's trembling hands took hold of the ropes of jib and topsail. The boat was beached in the cove below the Indian village cresting the ridge.

Drums, tom-toms, rattles, whistles, flaming torch pine knots, frenzied shouts from the village greeted the incoming ship. The tide would carry out the bodies and wash out all record of the crime.

Maquina led Jewitt to the chief's big house, an oblong of cedar planks and slab roof with a door in the end. It was exactly such as Cook and Vancouver had described it—from one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet long, forty feet wide, benched by berth beds separated from one another by boards and screened by suspended skins, with a stone fire circle opposite each family's quarters. A slab opened in the roof to let the smoke out.

Maquina's nine wives were there. Yes, there was that Wicanish chief's daughter from the south, who had dined in state with Vancouver and Quadra. She was older now, but was still a beautiful woman and she had a little son. She evidently pitied the white youth, for she came forward and patted him on the shoulder.

As the night darkened, there crowded into the big house a rabble of murderers led by Tootoosh, the chief killer, whose range was from Fraser River to the Columbia.

The unglutted blood-lust of wolves was still on the wild painted faces. Maquina could protect the white boy only by seating him on a bench by himself, where he had supper served off his own wooden tray with clam shells for spoons.

Jewitt could guess that the clamorous murderers were keen to complete the massacre. He learned afterward they wanted every white man killed so that no information of the crime could prevent other traders coming into Nootka; but Maquina became so enraged at the riotous bold demands, he grabbed up his war club and drove the Indians from the house. Then he signaled Jewitt to sleep with his own little son, a boy of eleven, so that no one could molest the white lad without harming the little Indian chief.

Indian children up to warrior age, when the hardening process begins, are the most affectionate little urchins on earth. Jewitt took the boy on his knee. The brass buttons of the dead captain's coat caught the little fellow's eye. Jewitt ripped them off and strung them on the cord round the youngster's neck. Maquina's smile broadened. Married to a squaw, this white boy would yet make a good warrior. Maquina pushed both youths to bed on a couch next to his own, bidding John sleep for a few nights with one eye open.

Jewitt slept not only with that one eye open, but with both ears, and well for him he did, for an Indian came bursting in at

midnight frothing at the mouth in rage with word that when he had been rummaging the hold—against orders to all the warriors—a huge white man in shirt sleeves had jumped from hiding among the rum puncheons and dealt him a box that nearly knocked his head off.

Maquina sat up, taciturn enough. What had the Indian been doing in the hold among the rum barrels? Then a grunt, which the warrior could not very well answer.

"You go back—bed," Maquina ordered the man. "Me and John kill that big fellow in morning."

The poke of a foot awakened John and the little Indian before dawn.

"We go kill that fellow."

Maquina led the way to the ship. The warriors were there before him, but not one had gone on board. They circled the ship in their dugouts, somewhat puzzled about attacking a white man whose single fist could knock an Indian head off. Were they afraid of disobeying Maquina, or of the white man's blowing up the ship?

Jewitt thought quickly. Here was a companion in captivity, could he but save the pugilist. The little Indian urchin clung to Jewett's hand. Jewitt warned Maquina of the danger of going on a ship full of powder which Thompson could blow up in an instant. Then he flung himself on his knees across the chief's path.

"You love your son? My father loves his. If you kill white man, I will kill myself. I will not live if you slay this white man—"

It wasn't exactly a lie, for the pugilist was old enough to be Jewitt's father; and to a younger Indian, the older man is always addressed as "father." One can hardly doubt the crafty old Maquina saw through the subterfuge, but it didn't hurt Jewitt in the chief's esteem. If there is one thing on earth an Indian despises it is a coward, and if there is one thing he adores it is a young buck brave enough to die for a comrade. Maquina also probably reflected that a white man in a ship full of powder with a match-lighter and such fists as the fellow had could be both a damaging antagonist and a good bodyguard.

"John, you go first. Tell that white man he your father—I save his life."

Jewitt went up the ship's rope like a monkey, and down the hatch stairs in a bound. A dim figure with a much swollen nose rose amid the rum barrels.

"My father," cried Jewitt, knowing well Maquina would now be on deck straining his ears, "the great chief will save your life if you will come ashore and make sails for his canoes."

"He wull, wull he? I'm liker to drop a match-lighter and blow all the cursed pagans to—"

He didn't say where, for Jewitt had clapped hands to the rash mouth and had fallen on his breast in a transport of joy at finding his "father" alive and, it can be guessed, whispered in the infuriated old pugilist's ear what kept that doughty champion's mouth shut.

So Maquina led both captives to breakfast back to the Great House, where the pugilist ate like a ravenous wolf and the white boy almost gagged at the filthy food. He had been unaware of this quality of the food when he had eaten from the chief's wooden tray in the half-dark of the previous night.

ALL the 24th and the 25th they unloaded the ship's cargo down to the last great hogsheads of rum and heavy chests of powder still left in the hold. Muskets, small shot, balls, blankets, swords, daggers, cloths in colored bolts, sails, spars, and ropes were carried ashore to the Great House for equal division. In the unloading Jewitt was able to save his own seaman's chest, the captain's and his own little writing desk, his box of tools, and the personal papers of young Ingraham the second mate, who had been his own particular comrade. These he afterward gave to Judge Dawes of New England.

It would be interesting to know whether this Judge Dawes was a collateral ancestor

of the Vice-President, as Coolidge of Gray's ship was a collateral ancestor of the New England family.

On the 26th, the hearts of the two white captives bounded with hope, and the Indians were thrown in panic fright at the sight of two ships standing off Friendly Cove; but the Indians began firing muskets from the ridge to warn the white sails off and the ships stood out to sea. Jewitt afterward learned these ships were the *Mary* under Coolidge, mate of Gray's day, and the *Juno*, sailed by Kendrick, who had been Gray's commander. Both ships were owned by Gray. But news of the massacre had already gone down by "moccasin telegram" to the Chinooks of the Columbia. You will remember that Tootoosh, the chief killer, ranged south of Vancouver Island to the Puget Sound tribes, and Indian news carries on the wings of the very wind. What the two ships did not know yet was that two white men were held captives.

But not a day was to be lost by the Nootka murderers in wiping out all traces of the crime before other ships came, or Nootka would be a shunned point and not a white ship would come for trade.

Tribes were gathering from the north, from the east, from the south, from the west, for a division of the spoils. If they didn't get a fair share they would tell the whites, and vengeance would come. Neuwit-tees, who Irving says massacred the *Tonquin* crew in 1811, and Suskwaps, and Clayoquots, and Chinooks, pirates of Fraser River, Columbia River, Puget Sound for distances as far as two and three hundred miles, all came. Of course, Maquina would have to hold a big pot-latch feast, in which he would have to give away all the plunder he could not hide to hold allegiance to him as the Big Tyee, or else be murdered for the plunder.

The pot-latch welcome set the two white slaves laughing in spite of the awful tragedy in which their lives were entrapped. Wrapped in folds of colored blanket goods and cheap nankeens flying to the wind, with painted masks on their faces, the Nootka village of fifteen hundred assembled on the ridge above the cove and welcomed the incoming flocks of canoes with yells that made the welkin ring. The Indians had donned white men's garb in grotesque fashion—sailors' smocks upside down for trousers; sailors' socks on arms, powder horns for necklaces. Some wore in their belts daggers thick as an ancient martyr's spikes. All had guns, to the youngest buck and squaw.

The cannon had been trundled ashore, and Thompson was stationed behind it to fire over the canoe-loads of people. We can guess that the old pugilist wished to tilt that cannon at a different angle and have his revenge if he had to die for it.

To the roof of his house ascended Maquina, erect in triumph; and to the roof ascended with him his tomtom drum beaters. Maquina whistled for attention, and through a ram's horn bade his warriors fire a volley of welcome up in air as he had seen Captain Vancouver and Don Quadra do.

The warriors did; but they didn't hold the muskets close to shoulder. The cannon roared and fifteen hundred muskets kicked. Heels over head went the Indian musketry men on the sand, and heels over head went many a paddler in waves tossed to a foam. The display proved Maquina the greatest Tyee ever known.

A song of triumph drowned any temporary embarrassment over the welcome, and half of a whale provided the feast. The mask-dance came on at night with the little boy chief Sat-sat-sak-sis decorated like a Christmas tree with silver bells.

Then the plunder Maquina and Thompson and Jewitt had not hidden by night was divided. A hundred muskets, powder, looking-glasses, beads, daggers—Maquina gave as if he were lord of largesse, and in return he received enough dried fish to keep his tribe for a year. The hogsheads of rum had not been brought ashore, but the small puncheons had, and the drunken revel was so dangerous that the women fled to the houses and Maquina stationed Thompson and Jewitt at

his bed-head with swords and pistols to shoot any intruders.

The feast seems to have lasted in one continuous debauch to the 12th of April, when one night with a frightful roar the ship blew up and flamed to the sky with rockets and burning liquor. An Indian chief had gone down in the hold seeking more liquor with a fire torch. That Indian and the powder and the good ship *Boston* went up together. The other Indians were too deadly drunk to realize the extent of the loss. And on the night of the 20th, when the bucks lay drunk and the women were in hiding, Jewitt stole out with a little gimlet and disposed of all the rest of the liquor kegs ashore by boring a tiny hole in the bottoms.

The pugilist was for taking the swords and cutting the throats of every sleeper; but that would have bettered their lot not one jot. Wicanish's tribe lay to the south—and Maquina's favorite wife was Wicanish's daughter. Maquina's sister was married to Tootoosh, chief killer of all the Pacific coast raiders, and his tribe reached down to the Chinooks of the Columbia. Two days' sail might have carried them to the Columbia with a fair wind, but what good would that have done? They would only have exchanged slavery under a friendly scoundrel for slavery under a Chinook or Clatsop, who might trade them back to Maquina's vengeance. Marooned they were as ever was a Robinson Crusoe on a Juan Fernández Island, with never a Man Friday to help them.

Jewitt and Thompson then went to work to win the friendship of the Indians by making bracelets of copper and necklaces of beads and clothing from the bolts of gay-colored nankeens, and the women reciprocated by keeping them well supplied with food. Maquina showed his growing favor by letting them live more or less by themselves back on the freshwater pool behind the ridge, where they could have Sunday to themselves to shave, wash their clothes and hold their Christian services with that little Bible and prayer book which had been tucked into Jewitt's writing-desk when he bade his parents farewell.

He knew now as far as human foresight could foresee that it had been a farewell forever. The one thing he did not know was that Lewis and Clark were coming overland to the Pacific. Yankee ships were under secret orders to watch the Columbia for their coming.

Fresh berries of every variety—strawberries, raspberries, blueberries — rank onions and turnips and carrots and peas from the abandoned Spanish and English forts of Hog Island, camas roots and moss soups gave some relief from the reeking fish diet with its stench of putrid whale oil.

To keep tally of the days which now seemed an endless procession of deadening despair Thompson, who could neither read nor write, besought Jewitt to get out the ship's almanac and begin to tally off the days from June. Ink was the difficulty. That was solved by boiling blackberries with charcoal and filtering both through sail-cloth. Shells provided bottles and goose quills the pen. A greater difficulty was to hide the log from Maquina, for Jewitt's chest still reposed under the bed next to the old Tyee's.

"John—you tell bad things about me?" asked a guttural voice one Sunday in the deep hiding of the forest, where Jewitt wrote his log. Maquina stood behind John watching the quill fly across the pages of the little blank account book.

What John answered is not recorded in the log. Thompson was for "giving the old pagan a box to send him about his business" but Jewitt quieted the old fellow—and an Indian never despises a brave man.

Maquina sat down and began telling his life to John. Had not his people welcomed white men from the days of Cook? To be sure Tootoosh, who had married his sister—or Tootoosh's father—had murdered a lot of Spaniards long ago on Martyr or Massacre Island down by Classet (Flattery), but then hadn't Martinez, in Gray's day, murdered one of Maquina's brothers, Cullicum? And hadn't Meares

kidnaped another brother and carried him off to China? And though the brother was brought back with plumed hat, was that the way to treat a big Tyee, who was white man's friend?

And hadn't one Captain Tawnington, when Maquina was away marrying the Wicanish chief's daughter, entered the Tyee's Big House, abused the women and rifled all the furs and food? And hadn't Meares, to whom he had leased a site for his fort, sunk the Indians' boats with cannon ball and seized their furs? Yes, his warriors had torn six white men to bloody pieces in their hands down Tootoosh's way, but the Indian law is life for life. That was revenge for old wrongs; so was the massacre on the *Boston*. But Maquina was good friend—good Tyee to good white men.

The old pugilist fairly spat at such excuses to get the taste out of his mouth. He hated "them and their cursed lingo—rattlesnakes—sharks—man-killers!" He'd gladly die to get his revenge. John wouldn't.

In fact, John's adopted father put Jewitt in more danger than did Maquina. The pugilist had a demon temper and struck sledge-hammer blows, which he called a "a gintle tap." One night when lighting the pitch-pine torches in the Big House the pugilist got a poke in the ribs. He struck back so quick an open palm blow that he sent little Sat-sat spinning with a bloody nose. Maquina rushed up to kill but Jewitt stopped him.

"If you kill my father, I will kill myself!"

And after all a fighter who could strike such blows was a good defender for Maquina himself.

But the pugilist's next escapade was much more rash. As far as can be gathered from legends that afterward crept into Spanish and English and American voyages, it was the son of Tootoosh or Wicanish he next mauled. Wicanish's daughter was Maquina's favorite wife. Maquina's sister was Tootoosh's wife. Both ruled terribly ferocious tribes. One of the tribesmen taunted Thompson with being "a white slave." Thompson answered the taunt with a pugilist's fist. Somebody bit dust and lost teeth. It was Maquina who patched up a truce this time, and that is why we can guess—but it is only a guess—that it was a Tootoosh buck who had offended.

For in spite of his being Maquina's brother-in-law, something was going bad with Tootoosh. Presumably a gift of harpoons and daggers and fish hooks atoned for the blow, but something was going very wrong with Tootoosh. He was either conspiring against Maquina's life in order to become chief himself or he was going mad. His wife came back to Maquina in terror of her life, and Maquina appointed Jewitt and Thompson as his night guard armed with pistol and dagger at each end of his bed.

Much of the story is legend and much more will never be known by us. Both Tootoosh's children, a young son and a daughter between fifteen and eighteen years old, died mysteriously. Maquina may have poisoned them or Tootoosh may have done the same thing, though he was indulgently fond of both. For Tootoosh was acting with a fearful strangeness like that of the werewolf man, or the mad cannibal who kills and devours what he loves best. It was one of the most curious cases of demon obsession in all Indian records. Such demon possession is known to this day among all Indians of the plains and northwest coast.

From the night of the massacre Tootoosh, who had been the most frenzied and maniacal of the dancers on the *Boston's* decks, had been seeing things not seen by other eyes. He would start, stare, strike at invisible foes in the air. Drunk or sober, Tootoosh saw things. When he slept, they haunted the dreams from which he wakened to fire and stab at the unseen foe, or rush through the forest at maniac speed in pursuit. Waking, they were still in the air all about him. Did he glance down? They were there. Did he try to eat? An unseen hand arrested his hand and he would hurl his tray of steaming food at the invisible phantom of his

disordered brain. But were they phantoms?

To keep him from injuring himself or his family the Indians tied him down to his berth bed, and when the phantoms came again the village could hear his screams of terror. In vain the medicine men beat their tomtoms to drive the spirits away, his family fired the white man's guns through the darkness of the forest and his paddlers took him out in his great canoe and cast their spears and shields and hurled their harpoons on the waves where he pointed with glazed stare.

Maquina may not have regretted the total collapse of his only real rival in leadership on the Pacific coast, especially as now in his old age the other Tyees were engaging in conspiracy. Wily Maquina's secret poisons may have had something to do with the derangement of his brother-in-law, for Tootoosh had been such a villain from his youngest days that only the reputation of his father had kept him from being shot by white men many years before.

The chief killer's name is variously spelled in the French, Spanish and American narratives, but he was known as Tootoosh generally. Jewitt refers to him in one place as the great killer on the *Boston* and in another place as the son of a great killer. There is no question that a man of his name tried to bribe the Hawaii boy in Gray's day to wet the priming of the great guns on Gray's ships, and there is still less question that his tribe tore six whites to bloody tatters somewhere between Juan de Fuca Straits and Puget Sound.

There is great confusion of all the tribal names in Jewitt's log. For his little book was issued in 1808 from Middletown, Connecticut, where he lived, before the "Lewis and Clark Travels" had come out classifying the tribes of the Pacific, and internal evidence shows that whoever wrote the book for Jewitt knew less about the coast tribes than we do about Thibet. The writer embodied in the book pious platitudes enough to paper a wall, writings which it is a safe bet the boy Jewitt never crowded into his little blank account book of three years' slavery.

Maquina took Jewitt across to see the sick man. Maquina asked Tootoosh whether it was the two captives who called down the spirits of the tormenting demons.

Tootoosh said:

"No—John and Thompson are good. I know you don't see them, John, but I do. They will let you eat, but they won't let me."

He patted John's hand and clung to it in staring tranced terror.

"Who are—*they?*" asked John.

"Hall and Wood—men who went ashore to fish and shoot night of kill. I caught them—I kill them! And now all the heads here — there — everywhere—laugh. Laugh at me—"

He rubbed his eyes as if to blot out the hideous apparitions.

Outside, Maquina asked John what he thought of it. John thought that it was hysteria or delirium running into the hallucinations of incurable insanity.

"Any cure?" asked Maquina.

"If it's hysteria, it can be whipped out of him; if insanity, he will die."

Maquina decided there and then on the whipping cure for his brother-in-law. The sick man was dragged out and pegged down, and as the pugilist was given the spruce broom one can guess it was laid on right heartily. Tootoosh then became wildly maniacal, frothing at the mouth, spitting, growling like a wildcat, biting and howling like a mad wolf—in a word, an animal in the shape of a man, his mind a blank. The Indians recognized the first signs of the werewolf cannibal, or what the Plains Indians call a *loup-garou.*

The madman was roped to his bed or to a tree outside his house, and even then it was no easy matter to hold him, for he bit through his cords. He died, still raving about the heads, in June, 1804.

Wrapped in red bark and skins, the body was lashed to a plank and placed in a deep cedar box with sea-otter skins for the dead man's barter with the demon guarding the Indians' Happy Hunting Ground. At midnight it was borne on

poles by eight men through the dusky forests to a rocky cave in the mountains. The women wept and sang plaintive dities on the solemn march through the moonlit whispering forests. All Tootoosh's possessions were burned at the mouth of the cave to drive off the haunting demons.

When the fires flamed up, Maquina gave a feast to dispel gloom, calling on his dwarf and buffoon to perform all sorts of pranks as the little chief Sat-sat spun round in dance with bells on his feet. The dwarf played monkey pranks on the assembled mourners. The buffoon ate and drank oil till Jewitt thought he would spout like a whale—as a matter of fact, he did a little later. And one of his tricks was to jump through the flame without catching fire. From which feats he usually came back so scorched that old Maquina had to heal the clown's wounds with presents.

But with all the revelry, Tootoosh's death sent the Indians back to Nootka horribly afraid. Hadn't John and Thompson called those devils down to haunt the tribe? Shouldn't they be sacrificed to appease the angry deities of darkness? But we are anticipating the story.

FOR the first months of the captivity the amazing novelty of their adventures banished brooding. The white men learned to cook food in waterproof woven pots with hot stones, to get fiber for shirts by sheathing soft bark from the inner boles of the great trees, pounding it to a pale cinnamon yellow and weaving it to a skein, from which was woven waterproof clothing, to dye the porcupine quills for trimming and to paint and bead the dehaired moose-skins got in barter from the Clatsops and Chinooks of the Columbia and Multnomah.

They went whale-hunting with bone harpoons attached to inflated bladders strong enough to keep the wounded whale afloat until, in spite of the lashing tail which often smashed a dugout to kindling wood, the Indians could spear it to death or tow it in to beach on the sand in a receding tide. They caught salmon in weirs or speared them through the clear water.

Jewitt taught the Indians how to make ladles out of iron and copper in lieu of their shell spoons, and in turn learned the arts of threading shells into a sort of ivory wampum, which was the coast tribes' currency for trade with other tribes as far north as Alaska, as far south as California, and of puncturing noses for ivory ornaments that extended as far out as the shoulders of the gallants whom the pugilist called "these sprit yard fellows" and used to bump every time he had a chance.

They hunted the beautiful big eight-foot sea-otter, now becoming shy and scarce at Nootka, helped in the work of hollowing out canoes from enormous trees and "sand-papering" them smooth as glass with moss and pebbles, met the Klamaths and Umatillas and Chinooks and Clatsops from Oregon, and bartered with other wilder tribes from as far north as the Babine and Stikine Coast—modern Prince Rupert.

They watched the terrible and cruel sun dance, when adolescent boys were transformed into full-blown warriors by self-inflicted tortures from which a martyr might have winced, hanging suspended from cords attached to the naked flesh of shoulder or breast till the flesh broke. Even little Sat-sat, the chief's son, had to prove his nerve at eleven years of age by not jumping when Maquina fired off an unexpected pistol near his ear at the danger of bursting the child's ear drum.

The days at first wore swiftly into weeks. They would have lost count of white man's time had not old Thompson compelled Jewitt to mark off each day in the almanac. Jewitt was getting all the Robinson Crusoe adventure of which he had dreamed in Hull, but as summer wore into wet, cold winter his heart sank. He knew that at least fifteen Boston ships were to be on the Pacific coast this year. Only three had passed Nootka and not one had come in.

Also the captives were no novelty now

to the Indian village and the women no longer brought food. There were hungry days. Both men could now speak a few words of the Chinook jargon, which was the language of trade to the Columbia. Some of the Columbia tribes urged the two whites to try escape, but Jewitt was afraid that was a trick to test loyalty to Maquina. It was. A younger sister of Maquina's wife urged him to escape to Wicanish on the south. Perhaps she wished to marry him, for she had a defect in one eye, which had deprived her of a husband. But Jewitt was afraid to fly to worse ills of which he did not know.

Then, in the autumn of 1803, their hopes sank utterly. All during the summer after holding service on Sundays in the dark woods behind the ridge beside the amber fresh water, they had both kneeled and prayed in turn for a rescue ship. But no ship had come in. Now the Indians were dismantling boards from houses, preparing to move in their dugouts to the winter hunting up the river at the head of the Sound, where no ship could find them. Fifteen miles up the river between lofty, beetling, somber cloud-draped crags the procession of dugouts paddled, with boards athwart, and belongings in the cedar boxes, and families on top of the crazy pile. This was really a sanitary precaution on the part of the Indians to let the winter rains wash out and disinfect the filth of the roofless houses in summer camp. It largely explained the marvelous health of the tribe in spite of filthy diet.

Jewitt heard during the winter the horrible fate of seven deserters from the *Manchester* of Philadelphia, whom Maquina had captured and put to death by choking them with stones, except one boy, Jack, who had been sold to Wicanish and had pined to death. The story was only too true, and in Lewis and Clark's day the name "Jack" was found tattooed on a squaw's arm. Was it the name of the dead boy?

The winter became a horror to the two white men. The soggy rains drenched their tattered clothing. They were not successful in trapping furred animals in deadfalls and they had no trinkets to barter for the warm otter-skin cloaks. Both were tortured by rheumatism. Maquina softened the hardship by letting them retire to a cabin by themselves, where with a clay and stone fireplace they tried to keep warm and dry before roaring fires; and if they had no blankets, they could at least bed down in soft dry leaves and the feathers of such sea-birds and grouse as they could snare.

Christmas Day, 1803. Was there ever a darker Christmas Day for castaways? They held service in the dim forest cabin and prayed on their knees for a rescue ship until they sobbed. Jewitt had craved beyond all things a Robinson Crusoe life. He was getting his wish. Their Christmas supper consisted of clams, whale oil and camas root. The root at least prevented scurvy and the oil added to body heat and purged off the poison of bad diet.

Snow fell, fell, fell in a white shroud all New Year's Day of 1804. A feast at a neighboring tribe under a chief Upquesta filled another dismal week.

It was at this feast Jewitt for the first time saw a shy gazelle-eyed girl, daughter of the chief, in whose gentle gaze he thought he read pity and interest for the two white slaves. She was kept closely guarded by the older squaws, but it is not unlikely that he made copper bracelets and bead trinkets and knives and spoons for her as he did for all the Indian women.

Though Jewitt and Thompson were now clad in tattered rags, their Sunday holiday kept them clean, shaved and decent to the eye. Spring saw the wanderers back at Nootka, where some Clayoquots and Chinooks from Oregon told Maquina frankly that there were some twenty ships out from Boston this year and they were going to punish the Indians for destroying the Yankee clipper. Tootoosh's madness was at its height at this time. It was in June, remember, that he died, and his death brought a crisis in Jewitt's life.

"JOHN," said the Tyee, "you marry Indian girl and become good Indian, or I have to kill you. People think you cause Tootoosh's death by black medicine and keep away any ship by curse. You marry Indian girl and have Indian boys and girls, you our friend. Not—"

He rubbed his hands as though crumpling a dead leaf.

Fishing was poor all the summer of 1804 and the Indians ascribed it to the blood or ghosts of the slain crew and demanded Jewitt's and Thompson's life to appease the demons of the seas. Was there no little independent chief amid the countless islands of Puget Sound, who ranged south to the Columbia, among whom Jewitt could find a friend? For he knew now he must get a letter out to the passing captains who paused at Gray's Harbor; and whom could he trust as letter-bearer to smuggle the letter out? Far into midnight he and Thompson planned and plotted and rejected plans and plots and then prayed —numb with fear, tossed between hope and despair, for all the world like the poor derelict dead trees that came heaving out on the waves to the sea, there to sink and rot from memory in an oblivion dark as the billows of a watery hell.

Gone was the glamor of the seas incarnadined by the glorious sunsets. Gone the glad glory and majesty of the cruel, sinister, far and lonely mountain peaks. Gone the beauty of the unseeing heartless stars and moon silvery and cold as curved dagger blade. In another year they, like Tootoosh, would be seeing things.

When he was afraid of his mutinous warriors Maquina would promise both ragged white men release, give them better clothing and station them again as body-guard at the head and foot of his bed, but when the danger had passed he would forget his promises and affect not to understand his captives' pleadings.

One day when mutinous young bucks were especially insolent and Thompson was washing out their personal blankets, a Wicanish fellow stamped the clean blanket with dirty sandals. The enraged pugilist seized a sword and slashed off the impudent buck's head. Maquina came and smiled, well pleased.

About a month after Tootoosh's death in June of 1804, Maquina took both captives—possibly as body-guard—on a war raid among the islands of the south. Jewitt had made him an especially fine dagger. For days all the raiding warriors had fasted and prayed to the Sun God for success in the wars. There were forty canoes with twenty men in each.

The raid in itself is unessential to this story. It was the usual massacre and plunder of a weaker tribe. Jewitt took four captives, which raised him in the esteem of the Nootka bucks, though it sickened him to see all the old and infirm slain in cold blood.

A young chief of Umatilla wanted to buy Jewitt after this raid. The chief could speak English and promised he would restore Jewitt to the Boston sea captains, but Jewitt again knew not what course to pursue, for some of these sea captains had told the Umatilla of two red-headed white chiefs now crossing the Shining Mountains who would be on the Columbia the next year. I need hardly tell that the two red-headed chiefs were Lewis and Clark, for whom the sea captains had been told to look on the Columbia in 1804 or '05. Some instinct told Jewitt he would do better to wait for them. Perhaps Maquina, too, had heard of the coming of the two red-headed chiefs, for he told John plainly he must marry "Indian *klootzman*—girl—or be killed."

But whom could Jewitt marry to ensure safety by alliance to friendly tribe? Not a member of Tootoosh's tribe, for they were his enemies. Not a Nootka girl, for that would bind him to Maquina forever. Not to a Clayoquot girl, for the Clayoquot's chief Wicanish was Maquina's father-in-law.

Then a great hope lightened the heavy hearts of Jewitt and Thompson. They talked it over before going up the river that winter of 1804-'05. Let Jewitt pick a bride from a tribe of the south, then get letters through her to the two white men coming with soldiers, whoever they were.

But Maquina was doing some crafty calculations, too. He meant to hold his gun-mender. He hastened the marriage. What girl would John take as wife? For marry he must and at once! Maquina would brook no delay. Jewitt thought of the shy gentle-eyed daughter of the chief seen in the winter feast. She at least was free of any connection with Maquina's tribe, or Wicanish's to the south, or Tootoosh's to the east. She would be one tribe nearer the Columbia, where the Umatilla said white men were coming and white captains called.

I can't in the least make out to what tribe she belonged; nor can I find anything like it in contemporary voyages, of which there were twenty-five or thirty this year. Jewitt calls them A-i-tiz-zarts and the chief Upquesta. He chose that fawn-eyed, shy, dog-faithful, clean young daughter of the chief. Jewitt calls the girl Eu-stach-ee-exqua. Some one who knows old Chinook jargon may trace the name from that. I can't.

I am not going to describe Jewitt's marriage. It is enough to say that old Maquina made himself cock of the walk and eclipsed both bride and groom. As he had nine wives himself, he must have been master of detail in ceremonies, but by his numerous family alliances he held sway over many tribes. He perhaps thought that Jewitt's marriage would add another tribe to his alliances. He would tolerate no rivals to the last, and that is worth remembering, too, in connection with Tootoosh's mysterious death about the time Tootoosh became ambitious to lead all the Pacific coast tribes.

Muskets and sea-otter bought Jewitt's bride. The buffoon and the dwarf cut a thousand capers to enliven the feast. The marriage procession came back in a long line of canoes, paddlers beating time to song, and the women conducted the little girl to Maquina's house, where for ten days she was instructed in a wife's duties before being entrusted to her husband.

The custom of the Indians is that the groom must spend the first year in his father-in-law's house, but if Jewitt thought to escape Maquina by that device, he reckoned without the old man. Maquina abrogated the custom by presents rich enough to compensate for the groom's services to the father-in-law and brought bride and groom back with him, assigning them a compartment in his own house between himself and little Sat-sat, who was now devoted to both white men.

Jewitt found, as many a white fur trader has found, his Indian wife of incalculable help. She kept his clothes free from vermin. She made and mended his moccasins. She sewed his moose-skins into wind-proof, and his cedar-fiber mats into waterproof, shirts. And Jewitt's wife found her white husband unutterably kinder and better to her in every way than any Indian—which goes to explain these alien unions so puzzling to people who do not know Indian life.

The yearly Indian devotions to the Sun God took place in December, 1804. And as Jewitt was now an Indian, he was ordered to attend them. The celebration lasted for two full weeks, up to December 29, and the usual cruel initiation of boys into warriors took place, one boy of twelve being carried round by six bayonets thrust through his flesh without a flinch from pain.

At this period Jewitt had startling enough examples of why Indian women prefer white husbands. His old apprenticeship to surgery had stood him in good stead during his captivity, and now a brother of Maquina's came to have his teeth sharpened. The teeth were sound. Why file them? The Indian replied his wife would not live with him, so he determined to bite off her nose to keep any other man from marrying her; and he did.

So much for the rosy dreams of Indian life being a halcyon golden age uncontaminated by civilization! The Indian was doomed to pass away because he was unfit to survive. And no sentimentalism can modify that fact—when people deal with facts, not fancies.

Again in February of 1805 the tribe returned from the hunting grounds up the

Sound to Nootka, and now Jewitt realized he must act swiftly if he was to escape. If red-headed chiefs were to be on the Columbia this year, he must get letters to them. Jewitt's wife was soon to have a child. That would give an excuse to send her back to her father; and he must trust her to get the letters through either to Lewis and Clark or some of the Yankee clippers, who came into Puget Sound and Gray's Bay.

It meant that the girl must give up the man she had grown to love with all the passion of her savage heart.

Statues commemorate the heroism of the Bird Woman, who guided Lewis and Clark across the Rockies. Statues will some day commemorate the girl wife of Pierre Dorion, who guided the Astorians to the Pacific. But more heroic than either was the little wife of Jewitt, who saved her husband's life by giving him up. Remember that Jewitt preceded Lewis and Clark by two years, preceded the Astorians by seven years, saved himself and the Philadelphia man by his quick wit when not a soul had escaped the *Tonquin*. He was the only Robinson Crusoe boy of American history, and died a respected American citizen in Connecticut. And his life was saved by a little, shy, unknown Indian girl of seventeen.

Jewitt himself was torn with terrible emotions of dejection and despair as if encoiled in a hopeless trap. His wife's sorrow was apparent to every inmate of Maquina's Big House. Maquina asked what was the matter. Jewitt told the Tyee they were not happy together, and the little wife did not betray the plan. He had told her of his own mother and sister, heart-broken over losing him.

"Send her back to her father and find another wife," retorted the Tyee.

Back she went without a whisper of the plot, and with her went sixteen letters to be smuggled through to white traders. There are few white women who love their husbands enough to be capable of this degree of devotion.

Then followed weeks of mental torture, of melancholy prayers for delivery in the woods beside the fresh-water pond, of fears of betrayal through miscarriage of the letters. The two captives' nerves were set to jumping at a foot-fall in the woods or a scowl from Maquina.

It was some time in March that the little Indian wife had been sent home. Indian runners had brought word of at least seven Yankee vessels up the coast in 1805, yet not one had come in. A list of almost a dozen traders is given in Lewis and Clark. None of the famous old names appear. Sea-otter trade was falling off and the Northwest coast was becoming infamous as dangerous.

EARLY in the morning of the 19th of July, when Thompson and Jewitt were working over the old anvil making daggers for Maquina, a dull reverberation like thunder came over the sea. Both men dropped their tools.

The sound came three times—cannon from an incoming trader signaling Nootka. The captives' hearts almost stopped beating.

"Don't betray signs of pleasure or they'll hide us. Pretend you don't want to leave them," urged Jewitt. "Go on working."

Maquina strode up.

"White man. Big canoe," he said.

"What's that to us?" returned Jewitt, pounding away at his daggers as the old pugilist sharpened edges.

"You no glad—go 'board?"

"Dressed like this—me an Indian—they'd throw us into the sea."

"My people hold council. Come up Big House," ordered the old Tyee.

In the Big House all was guilty confusion. Some were for knocking the two white men on the head and pretending another wicked tribe had massacred the crew of the *Boston*. Others were for carrying the captives back twenty miles in the woods till the vessel departed. The younger chiefs were for immediately releasing both men and trusting their intercession to save the village from destruction.

For once the old scoundrelly Tyee was

utterly nonplussed. If he did not go out and welcome the vessel he would miss their trade. And the cannon might blow his village to limbo. If he did go out to the vessel he might be held prisoner and punished for his crimes.

"What does John say?" he asked.

John had to have his wits about him, for on his answer hung both lives.

"White men treat good Indians as Indians treat them. If you want to go on board, you will be safe."

"You write letters captain—tell him how good I have treated you and old man?"

The slightest sign of joy over that question might have doomed both men.

"If you wish it," said John indifferently.

The letter John wrote you shall read presently.

"Read it," ordered Maquina.

What John read aloud is a jumble of pious platitudes. It is in the log compiled by Jewitt's biographer of Middletown.

I do not even apologize for Jewitt's deception. A mistake now would have cost both their lives and might have brought attack on the entire village.

Maquina's old eyes bored into the very marrow of John Jewitt.

"John—you no lie?"

The chief's glance was corkscrewing through the eyes of the two whites. Neither betrayed by an eyelash fear nor concealment.

"Tyee, have I ever lied to you?"

"No."

"Then why would I lie now?"

"I go get ready my big canoe. You go with me, John?"

"I go? No. If I go they'll hold me," Jewitt scouted the idea.

Had the captain of the brig now casting out anchor opposite Hog Island not already received one of Jewitt's appeals for aid, he would hardly have failed to betray surprize on receiving this amazing missive. Here is what it said:

To Captain ————
of the Brig ————
Nootka, July 19, 1805.

SIR:

The bearer of this letter is the Indian king by the name of Maquina. He was the instigator of the capture of the ship *Boston*, of Boston in North America, John Salter captain, and of the murder of twenty-five men of her crew, the two only survivors being now on shore. Wherefore I hope you will take care to confine him according to his merits, putting in your dead lights, and keeping so good a watch over him, that he can not escape from you. By so doing we shall be able to obtain our release in the course of a few hours. JOHN R. JEWITT,
Armourer of the *Boston*, for himself and John Thompson, sail-maker of said ship.

Maquina was welcomed to the *Lydia*—Captain Hill, Boston—and taken to the cabin for a deep draught of rum. When he turned from smacking those lips now dry of rum for two years, he faced five pistols and felt the irons clapping to his feet and the handcuffs to his wrists. The old scoundrel collapsed in the cowardly terror of all bullies trapped. His Indians were called in to witness the plight of their old chief.

"Now go back and tell your people if they touch as much as a hair on the head of the two white men, we'll blow their village to ——."

The scene ashore beggared description. All the Indians grabbed up weapons and rushed at the two whites—and the two whites stood nonchalant facing a frenzied mob of fifteen hundred.

Such is white blood. It required a higher kind of heroism and self-control than the self-torture of the horrible Sun Dance.

Maquina's wives, who had befriended John, and little Sat-sat clung to his hand.

"Will white men kill—?"

"Tyee is in no danger. I pledge my life for his," answered John quietly.

Stones were grabbed up, daggers brandished. The leaders threatened. They would cut the two dog slaves in pieces no bigger than finger-nails—they would burn them alive hanging by the heels above a slow fire!

John smiled and the old pugilist from Philadelphia could hardly keep his fists

unclenched. For obviously with Maquina's wives hanging to both white men and the little boy encircling their waists with his arms, the warriors couldn't exactly skin both men alive on the spot.

Perhaps, too, the younger chiefs realized that at last they had the chance to break the power of an old tyrant, whose wiles had terrorized the tribe for twenty-five years. At last the younger chiefs put a stop to the clamor and demanded that the mob listen to John.

"Men, your Tyee is only held to ensure our release. When we are sent back, he will be sent back.

"Kill—kill—kill slaves," howled the hot-heads.

"Kill away," said Jewitt, throwing open his shirt, "and you will see your chief hanging by his neck to the yard arm riddled by bullets."

At this, there was the silence of guilty terror.

"Send Thompson on board—I'll stay as hostage—and your chief will be released."

"Not a step without you," roared the old pugilist.

"Yes, go! The captain may lose his head and fire! Tell him to hold Maquina, and I'll be safe."

Thompson paddled out cursing "the pagans" as he had through all the years of his slavery; and when three Indians finally consented to row John out, Jewitt seated himself in the prow with his right hand on a pistol concealed under his shirt. Near the brig the Indians refused to paddle farther. Let John swim for it. But John had other plans, and drew that pistol. The paddles flipped with swift speed and the dugout bumped the hull of the first vessel seen at close range by Jewitt since March 22, 1803.

Samuel Hill, the captain, grabbed him in his arms and told him he had at last received one of the letters smuggled out through that Umatilla or Ulatilla. When they had got the letter, they had filled another old chief of the Columbia with grog to untie his tongue, but they could learn nothing but wild Indian rumors. The little Indian wife seems to have concealed herself as agent and used as messenger the Umatilla or Ulatilla.

The sailors afterward told Jewitt they could hardly recognize as human being the uncouth figure scrambling up the ship's ladder. He had been painted red and black from head to foot. His shirt was of hairy bearskin. His long hair was tied in a knot on the crown of his head with spruce twigs. His feet were bare but for sandals and his finger-nails had grown like claws.

John went into the cabin and had the irons knocked off Maquina. After all, though from selfish motives, Maquina had saved his life and many times mitigated his slave's lot.

On hearing the full story of the *Boston's* destruction, Captain Hill was for hanging Maquina to a yard arm, or shooting him from the mouth of a cannon, but Jewitt was against such a policy. He acknowledged what both French and Spanish traders afterward corroborated, that considering that Maquina knew every word Captain Salter of the *Boston* had said, the insults to the old Tyee had been outrageous. Also his families and hunters had been pot-shotted and abused by drunken white crews for twenty years. If Maquina were slain, or his village blown to atoms, the other tribes north and south would still remain and assuredly would take revenge on the very next ship.

In view of what happened to Astor's ship, the *Tonquin*, in June seven years later, it is a question if this clemency to crime proved wise. Authorities differ whether the *Tonquin* perished off Clayoquot or Nootka; but it does not matter much, for the Clayoquots were allied to Maquina's family, and the crime was repeated, when not a soul escaped but the interpreter, an Indian from Chehalis, Washington.

There is a nice point here for historians to argue. Years later, when Paul Kane, a wandering artist, was south of Flattery, he met a chief, Yellowcum, whose features bore evidence of white blood. Yellowcum said his father had been pilot of

the *Tonquin*, and was the only man of the white crew to escape. But no white escaped but only the Chehalis interpreter, an Indian. Was Yellowcum the son of John Jewitt's bride? His age would tally with either date far as Indian ages can be tallied. Jewitt's bride was the daughter of a Cape Flattery chief.

Another contemporary voyager records that a young Indian woman was seen with the name "Jack" tattooed on her arm, but as three Jacks left tattooted names on their dusky belles—Jack Ramsay, Jack Bowman, and a simple Jack—this point must also be left to conjecture.

Finally Chief Culloby of Culloby Lake, behind modern Astoria, who died in the 1850's, always said his father had been a white man who had been saved off a ship destroyed in Nootka to become a slave and mender of muskets. Was Culloby Jewitt's son? But what to do with Maquina? He richly merited death.

Jewitt's pledge that his life would be spared was honored, but before he was returned to the village restitution was demanded of every article remaining from the plundered *Boston*. Cannon, anchors, old muskets, seamen's papers and chests were trundled back by the cowed Nootka warriors. Then Maquina was presented with a blue coat all decked with brass buttons and a plumed hat, and sent ashore with the tears trickling down his wrinkled cheeks.

As far as known, with the one exception of the *Tonquin*, for which Maquina may not have been responsible, the old fellow lived on good terms with the white traders to 1818, when his name drops from all Yankee clippers' logs. He must have been well on in his seventies when he died.

BECAUSE of the lateness of the season and because Lewis and Clark had not yet reached the Columbia, the *Lydia* proceeded north to trade. When she got back from the north to the Columbia, Lewis and Clark had left for the East just a fortnight before, which establishes the date as April 7, 1806; but Captain Hill found one of the letters left at Fort Clatsop with the Indians, which is another of the dates to check up Jewitt's amazing adventures. In fact, there is not a place name, there is not a date, there is not a reference in Jewitt's Log, which can not be checked up with contemporary ship logs.

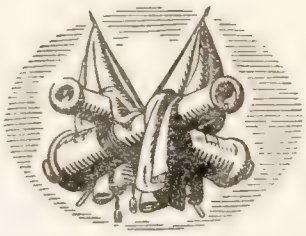
The confusion of his names for Indian tribes with Lewis and Clark's names arises from the fact that Lewis and Clark used the Chinook names and Chinook was a sort of universal ship lingo of all native tongues on the Pacific, whereas Jewitt used only the Nootka names for the tribes.

Jewitt seems to have looked up, or heard of his little son, for on the brig going up to Nootka before proceeding to China, he met Maquina and exacted from the Tyee the promise when the boy came of age, which would be 1826 or 1827, Maquina would send for him and care for him as he would his own son. But by 1818 Maquina drops from history. If Yellowcum was Jewitt's son, he remained with his mother's people and was friend to the white man certainly down to the 1840's, when Paul Kane met him.

The brig *Lydia* left China in February 1807 and reached Boston in midsummer, when Jewitt, who had had enough of Robinson Crusoe adventures for the rest of his life, seems to have settled down in Middletown, Connecticut, whence his log was issued before the Lewis and Clark Journals had interested the world in the Pacific Northwest. There must be descendants of Jewitt both east and west. If such exist, it is not yet too late to gather up family tradition of one of the most remarkable and little known adventurers of the Yankee clippers that belted the world from 1792 to the War of 1812.

EDWARD SHENTON'S

Come You Home a Hero



WHAT was left of the company came out of the line in the early morning. The sky was full of dirty clouds like a lot of bags swollen with rain and hanging close to the round bare hills. The men plugged along not saying much beyond Corporal Heitland's plaintive, reiterated, "Boy, I sure am dragging low today!" A mumble of agreement from the scattered column echoed each repetition.

There were a lot of fellows missing: Dicky Dunlap and "Tar-Heel" Webster. Joe Burke was carrying his dead brother's pack and sobbing under his breath. Sergeant Mendenhull, Stewart Reinhardt, Brad Long, little Tommy Meggs were gone. The dumb wop, Mascagnini, was the only one remaining in the fourth squad of the second platoon.

They passed a village, the roofless houses squatting like gray old men with their hats off. A battery of 75's was in position near a mangled orchard and the gunners were scurrying across from their dugouts in the high bank along the road to a barn where a couple of K. P. dished sweet-smelling slum and coffee, hot out of two G. I. cans.

"Oh ——, that's a *bon* smell!"

The day was at hand when the company reached the hillside where they could rest until their next time up. Food was ready. They ate gloomily, crawled into their holes and slept.

While they were sleeping the replacements arrived. Four reported to Corporal Heitland. Among them was Todd Blair.

He was a tall, thin boy, still pale from a mild attack of the "flu" on the boat coming over, still dazed by his abrupt entry into the war. He sat pondering the amazing scene before him; the gentle slope gnawed by the hobs of innumerable troops, terraced at regular intervals with the frail roofs of boughs or shelter halves above the shallow dugouts; the road at the end of the valley with the camouflage resembling thousands of small banners, dingy decorations for the parade of death. A solitary balloon hung in the clearing sky. The wind brought a distant faint muttering, as if the sea lay beyond the hills. The continuous sound fastened upon his mind. Presently he would enter that sea. He listened and felt his heart beat faster. A monstrous sea breaking in red clanging waves of lead and steel, rending the swimmers—

The sun slipped through an opening in the gray clouds. The worn soil turned gold and amber and gaudy yellows; bits of white houses on the far slopes to the rear appeared suddenly like squares of paper flung in some gigantic game of hare and hounds. The few men awake felt better immediately; Todd felt better.

Some of the horror dissolved in the bright sunlight. As if the new clarity in the day had penetrated to Todd's mind, he recalled his father's words:

"It's a tradition. Your grandfather and great-grandfather—they were soldiers. I served ten years in the Guard. All the Blairs have carried a rifle at some time. You have an incomparable chance. You carry not only our love and prayers but the unstained military record of the Blairs." His father loved to talk. He had a grandiloquent, impressive manner. "With that blood flowing in your veins you can not fail to do your duty."

The wind increased and hurled the baggy clouds out of sight beyond the eastern horizon. The sun had the whole sky to itself. The heat was comforting. Todd pillowed his head on his pack, lighted a cigaret, and stared with half-closed lids into the glitter. He thought about duty and glory and began to tell himself the story of what would happen in the next few days.

He saw a battered house and little funnel-shaped puffs of smoke spurting from the window. He crawled along a wall, through a door— Three Germans huddled over a Maxim. He shot one. He bayoneted one. The other surrendered. . . A smile of drowsy satisfaction curled his young mouth. He was a Blair. The Blairs were soldiers. It was a tradition. He knew that he would do his duty; he was eager to prove himself. He wished to talk with some of the soldiers, those who had been through things, who had looked into the blind eyes of death and grinned. But he hesitated to question the few he had seen. They gazed at him with an impersonal, dull glance. When he had reported to Heitland, the corporal said:

"Take the third hole up the line. It was Covichi's. He ain't comin' back."

Who was Covichi? An Italian, probably; a swarthy boy with large black uncomprehending eyes. A Neapolitan, perhaps, with a sweet thick voice and a young dark-haired girl waiting in a house on Catherine Street. . . "Ain't comin' back!" The warm night split in a wail of heart-break. "Oh Jesus! He ain't comin' back, Mother!" *Mater doloroso*— Tonight Todd Blair would sleep on the dry earth that had cuddled Covichi and Covichi would sleep behind some torn wall. . .

A burly sergeant passed and Todd said—

"Sergeant, excuse me—when do we go up to the line?"

The soldier paused and stared at him. His eyes were weary and disgusted. He spat suddenly and went on without answering. A shell burst on top of the hill a good two hundred yards away. Todd leaped to his feet to see the tawny fountain spout in the sunlight. Half a dozen men ran out of the billowing smoke and dust. Something whined overhead and Todd gave a yelp of pain and surprize. He sat down clutching his shoulder where a fragment of shell had ripped the flesh. Two soldiers scrambled out of their shelters, and then others. A little group formed around him and a first-aid man bandaged the wound and pinned a tag on the front of his new blouse. The burly sergeant sauntered into the circle and, looking at Todd, began laughing. The first-aid man helped Todd to the dressing-station and at dusk the ambulance took him back.

TODD was an irritating patient. He bothered the doctors with his daily question, "When do I get out?" When he rejoined the company it was in a village at the top of a hill. On the way up two ideas contended in his mind. The first was a determination to experience some of the events his wound had postponed; the second was to find the sergeant who had laughed and tell him exactly what he thought of him.

The company was in reserve, the men quartered in the cellars of the houses. It was dusk and Todd could see down a long slope to where a stream moved sluggishly, silvered in the twilight, between small clumps of trees. He touched the wound stripe on his sleeve and felt like a veteran

as he entered the tiny square at the center of the village where the rolling kitchen stood in the shelter of a house and an ambulance was parked under a stone arch. Corporal Heitland sat on the rear step talking to the driver.

"Hello," said Todd genially. "I'm back again."

"Uh?" said Heitland. "Oh, you're the bird got slapped back at Dravigny, ain't you?"

"I am," said Todd. "And I'm looking for that sergeant who laughed when I was hit."

"Well," said the corporal, "you better quit lookin'. If he ain't in hell, he oughta be. So if I was you I'd be calm an' take it out on the Heinies."

"Killed?"

"Long ago. Two weeks to be exact. He stuck his mooch right into a one-pounder."

"That's a shame."

"Tough, ain't it? He was one grand soldier, that boy, even if he was a bit rough."

"Well, it's too bad. I wouldn't have licked him."

"No," said the corporal, "I guess you wouldn't have."

He lost interest in Todd and resumed his interrupted conversation with the ambulance driver. It was concerned with one of the two major topics of the A. E. F.

"Lissen, if you wanta make that broad you lissen to what I'm tellin' you—"

Todd eased his pack and waited while the corporal expanded his introduction, distilling the delicate essence of a rich erotic past. The dark came and the amorous adventures continued endlessly. Presently word was passed for chow and men appeared vaguely in the black rectangles of doorways, slunk along the walls, by twos and threes approached the rolling kitchen, received the slum and faded into the darkness. Todd unbuckled his haversack and drew out the spotless mess-kit. At that moment four shells descended from the opaque height of the sky and burst in the square. When the turmoil had subsided Todd Blair, with a sliver of steel imbedded in the softness below his hip, was picked up and loaded into the ambulance.

THE truck bounced along the badly mended road. The dawn waited on the far peaks of cloud as if afraid to penetrate the uproar of the misted world. Todd sat beside the driver and listened to the cannonade, fingered his rifle and peered into the hazed landscape.

"Are you sure?" he said.

"Absolute," answered the driver. "Genril Poishing told me hisself. I says, 'O. K. wit me, Jack!' "

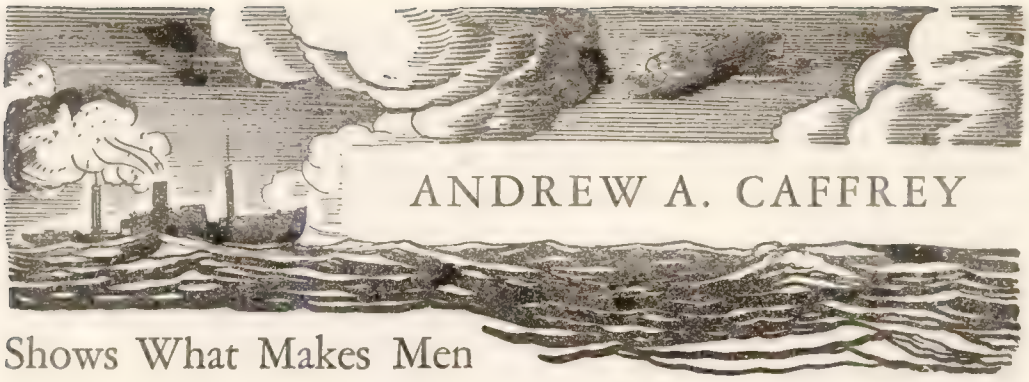
The country was flat as far as Todd could see; peaceful country with patches of neat woodland and clean trench-lines wandering across the green. The towns were almost intact. They reached divisional headquarters about ten minutes of eleven. Todd looked straight ahead. He was racing against some absurd thing. The guns thundered at the finish. The truck stopped at a farmhouse where a number of similar trucks were parked.

"Your outfit's about a kilo on up," said the driver.

Todd descended and trudged along the pale roadway. The sweat ran from under his helmet. He glanced at his wrist watch. Eleven o'clock. A second later the world plunged into silence. A single 75 far to the left barked disapprovingly. Then the quiet returned, not to be broken.

Todd left the road and ascended a slight knoll. He could see a long distance ahead to a line of shattered trees where tiny figures emerged from a trench and danced fantastically. He watched them for a time. Then he took his virgin rifle, shoved in a clip and, elevating the muzzle to the heavens, fired five shots over the grave of the war.

Quiet! Todd thought of his father and the Blair tradition. Stillness all about him! He thought of the German helmet he had promised his girl, and of the three shadowy figures bent over the Maxim—one he shot, one he bayoneted—He looked at the two wound stripes on his sleeve, put his head on his arms and sobbed.



ANDREW A. CAFFREY

Shows What Makes Men

Air-Sized

"LOOK before you loop!" Mr. Googan, super of air mail, was mad when he gave the warning. "I'd advise you jaybirds on my division to look before you loop!"

Googan, pacing the floor of his west coast office, was all burned up over something that had happened on the east seaboard. The press of the whole nation told about it.

A flyer—air mail knew that it was one of her own, pilot Miller—had knotted his line-of-flight around the narrow waist of Brooklyn Bridge's great span. The bridge had been looped, in other words.

A continent of some twenty-six hundred flying miles spread out and piled up between Googan and the East River meant nothing toward the abating of the super's official ire. The boss was hot. He had a right to be hot, for only that morning Googan had received word to the effect that pilot Miller was being transferred to his—Googan's—field. Miller, the notification said, would report by airplane, was already on his way west.

When he received the notification of Miller's coming, Googan began to feel that he was being ganged. Only recently he had found it necessary to reinstate one Rutter on air mail. It was against his better judgment, but an emergency had prompted the act. Pilot Rutter was, perhaps, one of the worst nuts in the game. Now, with Miller and Rutter flying on the same route, the sky was going to be crowded. For it would be a case where two constitute a mob. And Googan knew it.

Of course there was nothing official about Miller receiving credit for the bridge stunt. You could hang a man for that. But those who knew Miller were willing to bet that he had pulled it. Then his transfer seemed to cinch the case. We pilots of the in-bad Western Division looked ahead to Miller's coming. Those who didn't know Miller at least knew about him. And those who didn't know Miller hadn't been paying attention to things. I'll jog your memory.—you'll recall this incident:

Out in the Islands, a young Medical Corps lieutenant diagnosing the beef as petrified and the viands in general as maggoty and not fit grub for troops stood up and said so. If you recall the case you will remember that his was almost as notable a fight as another similar one of more recent memory. But the Army buries its own dead. It can't stop its officers from trying, but it can make

them——sorry that they did.

The young medico was Miller. General Boots—then in command in the Islands—told some one to tell Lieutenant Miller which transport to take. When the designated transport lifted its hook, or slipped its lines, Miller was aboard, with his army career left behind. Also his heart.

Some say that it was Miller's attentions toward the old man's only daughter, Ann Boots, more than the meat racket, which caused him to be cashiered. A well-known magazine section gave a full page to that side of the story. But, if the old man so decrees, it is well nigh impossible for a girl to receive mail on an army post. Miller never heard from Ann Boots. We who knew him best knew that he was bitter.

When the war came on Miller joined the Canadian air forces. He left a record both as a flyer and as a flight surgeon that reads like fiction. Wherever he has moved romance seems to have moved apace. But romance, where it means love, has always been out of step. In the back of his head he has always had the idea, not that he was wronged but that his Island fight was right. And when a man gets to thinking that way and can find no re-entry into the fight, he's likely not to care. Miller, judging by his air work, didn't.

"Wait till he comes!" Rutter told the gathering in Googan's office. "You birds haven't seen any flying at all!"

"That roughneck ex-hoss doctor'll find the going hard here," Googan cut in. Then the hostile super storied certain happenings of Miller's past. And during several days of bad weather the office listened to the super's anti-Miller rantings.

For four days the storm held the coast; sea travel and air work ceased. The blow came from the east, buffeted Googan's office at the harbor's edge and blew out to sea. You'd wonder where all the wind, rain and clouds came from. And in California, too!

In the bayside office Mr. Googan impatiently awaited the storm's end and the hour when he could once more route his flying mail carriers into the eastern sky. Googan hated the storm. Storms abolish flying, wipe flying out as though it had never existed. When air-mail flying was interrupted Mr. Googan's troubles piled up. "The mail must go" was his slogan. But it didn't.

Googan paced a figure eight, like that of an animal in a zoo, on the office floor. The eight double-circled from the door to the Pacific-side windows; then around his desk and the coat rack. At the Pacific end he would hesitate to scowl at the sea. On the back laps he'd move with elephantine sway from picture to picture. Pictures of Googan. They glutted the walls. Those pictures were the oil on the troubled waters of Googan's life. He knew his oil.

"They're swell pictures," pilot Rutter mused from his flat-on-the-floor position behind the stove. "Yes, sir, they're sure—"

"Lay off!" I warned. Rutter was forgetting how shaky his footing in air mail was.

"Lay off what?" he questioned. "Can't I say that the super's pictures are good? What we want to do is get several hundred of these Googans all in one group like they use to do with Teddy's pictures; eh, Mr. Googan?"

It looked like a sure bust. The turgent veins in Googan's countenance were as indicative of guilt as cranberry on the table-cloth, and the same color. You could feel the office tighten up. Carson, the wireless man, busy with the reception of outside stuff, bent low to his key. Rich, the clerk, pulled drawers. And the several loungers pulled for Rutter and hoped for the worst.

Googan, getting set for the offensive, had rolled his cigar into an off position. The way he puffed that weed would make you think that he got them for nothing.

He exploded.

"Rutter—Rutter!"

"All present or accounted for, sir," Rutter answered.

"Rutter—" the super suddenly rolled

his gaze skyward through the roof—"who do you suppose that is?"

"Santa Claus," Rutter guessed.

"That's Miller," said the field clerk, rummaging for the notifying message which had been placed on Googan's desk during lunch hour. "Miller left Elko this morning. He caught a tail-wind and passed up Reno—came right through in one hop."

"Why didn't you tell me that this scourge was loose in the land—or sky—and due here!" barked Googan. "And he's flying mail equipment in a storm like this!"

"How could he tell you when you were out for lunch?" interfered Rutter. "And since when have you been so careful of mail planes?"

"Pipe down!" I coaxed along his shins with a heavy boot. "Don't side in with these pen-pushers—it's their fight."

Out in the mud a plane had just landed. A few minutes later the door nearly left its hinges. You could cut the silence of the rest of us, so heavy and thick it seemed.

Miller tossed his cracked goggles into Mr. Googan's "in" basket and deposited a greasy, dripping cap in the "out." He had arrived.

"Hello, Googan," he said without looking the super's way. "Got a smoke, Rutter?" Then he added, "You here, Mac?"

Googan's swivel-chair squeaked and squealed as the newcomer settled back and swung dripping boots to the super's blotter.

By looking at Miller you'd have thought that he couldn't be much of a pilot. He stood in everything that he owned. What he owned was one pair of very ordinary long trousers and a couple of unbuttoned olive-drab shirts. Both were on his person as flying equipment. When he donned that outrageously dirty cap, with its visor to the back, and pulled up on his belt, he was ready to fly — short hop or coast-to-coast trip. The thing wasn't being done that way; such drab dresses were bound to abolish the legerdemain of the game and destroy the romance of air. It was just as unorthodox as refusing to roll up one's sleeves before removing the kicking rabbits from a battered hat. It made the game look easy, common. How could the rest of us retain our sway on the public imagination with such guys as Miller dressing like so many longshoremen? It couldn't be done. There should be a pilot's organization to enforce the wearing of nifty clothes for airmen.

Many of us had known Miller in the East. As they come and go, he was plenty hard. His continued presence in air-mail was made possible only through his knowledge of many slightly post-war peculations in the service. That knowledge was Miller's ace in the hole. It is always good to have an ace in the hole. Better still, let that ace be a club; then stand ready to use the club which is your ace in the hole—and use it! Therein lies one secret of holding a government position. Miller held his.

Super Googan's welcome could not be recorded as a triumph for Miller. The super took an ambushed peek through the brush of his eyebrows and guardedly mouthed his cigar. Then, by way of showing who was who and why, he instanced several little escapades of Miller's late commission. His malign attitude and talk, sharp as hail, warned the flier that he need not hope to be free of the super's jealous watching.

"There'll be no looping of bridges—"

"Just a minute, Googan," Miller interrupted flatly, "who said that I looped the bridge?"

"Well, if you didn't it's because you didn't think of it!"

"Right!"

"And if you didn't think of it, it hasn't been done—but it has!"

"Correct again."

"What do you mean?" Googan demanded. "How do you mean that! Did you or didn't you?"

"You figure that out," laughed Miller. "Let bygones be bygones is my word."

Having hoaxed the super into undignified curiosity, Miller smoked and smiled.

His talk had stopped Googan. The latter steamed the western window and tried to subdue the Pacific.

"How do you mean that," repeated Rutter, under his breath. "Did you?"

Miller's answer as we heard it seemed to be the two-grunt Mid-West equivalent of the English affirmative—"Uh-huh."

FOR a long time, off and on, the wireless operator had been wailing.

"That's ——. That sure is ——."

"What's —— besides working under Googan?" Miller demanded.

Carson, the wireless man, explained. He had only been able to pick up the call and a general idea of the emergency. Perhaps he had built up the story a little from what he had gathered.

Nearly four hundred miles offshore, on a storm-driven tramp steamer, some one and the Grim Reaper were coming to the tape. The tramp, long overdue, carried no sea-surgeon. With no help for the sick man the old boy with the curved cutting instrument looked like a sure winner. A few more hours and it would be too late.

Ships which answered the call for aid, with the exception of one, gave positions hours removed. But even if they had been in close a surgeon could never have been put aboard the tramp with such a sea running. The one ship standing by had done so for hours with the hope of eventually being able to rig a breeches-buoy when the storm offered the first sign of quitting.

Again our operator said that it was a —— of a note.

Miller leveled all barriers with one bright idea. When Miller once got an idea every expedient as it came to mind was worked while hot. His was a policy of doing things now and asking the necessary questions later and at leisure.

"Situations such as this are the things that will sell aviation; it was made for us!" Miller explained. "As some of you know, I'm an honest-to-surgeon-general doctor. Now—we can take a mail plane and the necessary instruments, fly out to the tramp, turn into the gale and land—crash, of course—on the deck. Once there, I can handle this case. Carson, try to find out what the case is; telephone the coast guard station. I used to be good."

As an afterthought he added; by way of making it look easy, "If the Navy can land planes on a whole deck, we should be able to do it on a quarter-deck." He turned to the chief mechanic. "What have you got in the hangar that is ready to fly? Let's go out and see." They left the office.

"It's an army official," Carson said, hanging up the receiver after talking with the coast guard station. "The old boy—a high ranker, they said— was on a transport headed for the Islands. He was taken down with galloping appendicitis. They thought that by putting him aboard the tramp, a few days out, he could get back here to a good hospital. Then the storm stopped the tramp. And the old appendix, they think, has busted."

"An army officer!" I said to Rutter. "That will change Miller's mind."

"It won't," Rutter said. "He'd go if it was an M. P."

When Miller returned to the office, things began to move. In the proposed undertaking he saw just a chance of pulling it off. Only a possibility—and no more.

"You'll give it a whirl with me, Rutter?" It was more of a statement than a question.

Rutter, the willing outlaw, was for anything that was different. He went in one hundred per cent.

"I'd try it alone, Rutter," Miller went on to apologize, "but if it's all clouds and no stars after dark—" I glanced at the clock: it was three-thirty then—"well, a bird will go goofy trying to fly in the black with no outside lights to level on. If the going is heavy, we can swap off on the controls every ten minutes or so and keep the old ark right side up."

"I'm a he-cat in the dark," Rutter guaranteed.

"Then the pickled mice will be on me if we pull this off. That's jake!" Miller

promised. "Let's hop to it! We'll get under way right now. It'll be dark before we're half-way. Nearly four hundred miles, due west. And a tail-wind blowing—that will take a little better than three hours. It's easy!"

"No such a thing!" Googan had held his peace until now, thinking to spoil the plan at the last minute. "Not a chance, Miller; not by a —— sight! Succoring ships at sea is the Navy's business—not ours."

"Yes," argued Miller; "but the Navy is particular about keeping the Navy dry on days like this and Rutter and I are going down to the sea in a ship—a mail ship it'll be, too!"

"You're not going to sacrifice a mail plane," Googan again protested. "No, sir-ree! Not if I know anything."

"You don't," Rutter chirped. "So it's all right."

They had expected opposition from the super. Miller had been toying, in a manner that promised high-handed play, with the butt of his cross-country revolver where he wore it, pirate fashion, tucked into his belt. Googan noticed that toying. The cigar ceased its shuttle trips from side to side. The bulging eyes bulged a little more and froze, glazed and fearful. Miller had drawn the side-arm and was slowly waving it in the general direction of the shrinking super. Googan's fear of guns had long been a laugh for us of the air mail.

Then, foregoing the niceties of polite address, Miller waded into the super.

"Say, Goog! Listen!" The abbreviation, right there in the fat official's own office, was nothing short of piracy. "Goog, do you want to come along, too? No? Well, what we want from you is silence—and not too much of that, even! The place for you fat matronly officials is in hotel lobbies—not out here where there's work to be done.

"Now, Goog, what you don't see isn't going to hurt you." He crowded the super toward the door. "And you can find plenty to do down town. Your publicity is running behind. Alley-oop!"

The super shifted gears noisily, nervously, as he left the field.

"Come on! Hop to it, Rutter; and get that plane on the line. Warm it up!"

They pulled on heavy flying suits and moved fast. The plane they decided to use was Googan's double-control ship, the *Eagle*.

"Don't stand there, soldier."

Miller turned to the indolent infant-terrible of air mail, pilot Vale. Vale was Mr. Googan's white-haired boy. He had expected his chief to carry the day and had been a silent bystander till now. His disaffected attitude toward Miller neared insult. It had been unnoticed by Miller—until now.

"Vale, my short-coupled friend," Miller dictated, "you jump on your loud, yellow charger and ride like —— for the city hospital—did you find out what the case is, Carson?—and I'll telephone them what instruments to give you. On your way!"

"The —— you will!" Vale growled. "My boat's no taxi and I'm not your servant today."

The cocky, vain little —— had fewer good points than a perfect sphere.

Miller halted Vale's line of patter.

"Your boat'll be a hearse and you won't be hearing the traffic whistles, either," he threatened, "unless you get off your dead hams and right now." This dry-cleaned language isn't exactly the line that Miller used.

"Drag anchor, Vale," Rutter advised as he started for the hangar. "You're taking one-way orders here."

Vale went.

Carson explained the information received at the coast guard wireless station.

"An army officer," Miller mused, "why couldn't it have been a Chink coolie?"

Then he got in touch, by phone, with the city hospital.

I always feel pretty much outnumbered with such birds as these. A sort of estimative sixth sense tells me where to fall in and behind whom.

"Let's see, Mac!" Miller turned from the telephone and, in selective mood,

scanned me as though digging deep into unused cells for almost forgotten knowledge. "Mac, weren't you one of the favored few that Googan sent to the Naval Air School to take that course in aerial sea-navigation? —— right, you were! We can use you now, you ancient mariner."

"But going out there with a plane is all pipe-talk," I argued. "You can't stop rolling—this type of plane can't be landed and stopped from rolling on a deck."

"Deck!" he scoffed. "Mac, there's no deck room on a tramp. We'll just mush this plane into the rigging and crash. With this wind on our nose, it'll be a cinch." This I knew might be done with a break of luck.

The course in naval navigation to which Miller referred had been anything but complete, but in scantling form treatment it had given a practical knowledge of the rudiments of the art. I reneged, nevertheless; tried to minimize the chance of my being of any use to them.

Ignoring my protests, Miller showed me how easy it would be. Then he turned to the wireless operator with final instructions:

"As soon as we take-off, send that we are on the way. Have them line those two ships out and cover as much water with their blown smoke as possible. Tell them to use plenty of rockets and flare their funnels after three hours have elapsed."

Then turning to me he said:

"With those two ships spreading smoke over twenty or thirty miles of ocean, you'll have to be a pretty rotten navigator to miss out in four hundred miles and only a little more than three hours' flying. The ships are dead west and a tail-wind blowing, so there'll be little danger of side-winds unless the blow changes outside the Heads."

Rutter had had the plane made ready and trundled to the starting line. The motor was being tuned-up and tested.

Being charged with the business of navigation, I made a few funereal preparations; that is, I felt that they were such. Luckily, the compass in the *Eagle* had been accurately calibrated a few days before. Checking it on a naval instrument with the motor running we tested it once more. The test was good. Both compasses agreed. The variation, at all motor speeds, was very slight. So I ransacked memory for all the navigation I ever knew and resigned myself to the situation. With a cold skeptical measure of my own ability, I kicked stones and grew nervous.

"You birds in the front cockpit wear plenty of clothes," Miller advised us. "Plenty of clothes, and crash-helmets. When I pile this old crate on the tramp's deck, there's going to be lots of wreckage flying for a few seconds. Chances are somebody's going to get hurt. At the last minute have the goggles off and your heads covered for a spill. I'll pancake her down and in wing first, but you two'll go out through the side of the old crock. And I don't mean perhaps! With lots of clothes, you'll make good shock absorbers for me. And I'm important."

It was a fine, bright outlook.

"I'll ride her down just as far as you do, soldier," was all Rutter promised, and added, "Mac's my cushion when the crash comes. But never mind trying to save the ship, Miller; just be careful of Mac's goggles—he's wearing his good-luck goggles."

For a few minutes the take-off was delayed. Vale had not returned with the surgical instruments, and the *Eagle's* motor was not hitting just right. The mechanics cussed much and worked little in locating the trouble. Miller talked by way of keeping the morale at par.

"Mac, you long-faced old bat, I don't blame you for balking; it's a long shot and no kidding. But we've got to give it a try. I'm a surgeon, you perhaps know that, and I can't hedge now. Why, Mac, my old dad used to pound the wet tail of a wet horse all night on milder calls than this is—and I'm his son. I wouldn't fly across the street to save the whole membership, past, present and future, of West Point, if there was another doctor

available, and you know it; but this is the matter of a life. Anyhow—what's the difference, Mac; you and I and Rutter have seen everything, been everywhere. Why, we've flown! Think of that—we've flown! And we've got to be game; we've got to be air-sized! Got to be air-sized to offset the gang we're working under or else American aviation's done for." Miller's grip on my arm was strong as an oaken hand. The man was bitter and hating anew, hating with the hate that a system will pu t into a man of fight. "We, Mac—we belong. They can't turn us back!"

His determination energized the lagging thing within me. Till then mine had been a middling interest. But the thought of a man dying—and this thing of being what Miller called "air-sized." It was worth while. We all want to feel that we belong.

Some may say that that surface stoicism is only skin deep, merely bluff, rapidly wiped off under fire. No such a lie! Not fair! Such men as Miller and Rutter wear the hard-boiled, grinning mask where spotlights never shine. It's unfeigned. They're not afraid and whistling in the dark; they know no fear.

A big system of abusive little men was making straight-browed cagey hard-maulers of willing flyers such as these. Consequently, Miller and Rutter felt a certain abhorrence for a white race that could furnish so many under-grade specimens for a service that rates men; a service, like that of the sea, that demands all one has, then calls for more. These two, of course, were in bad. And if there had been a branch of the air-mail service in the semi-mythical Island of Yap or at any point west, Miller and Rutter would have been sent there. Shanghaied if necessary.

At four o'clock Vale returned and we got under way.

WHEN we took off the far ends of the mail field were heavily ambushed in a drapery of gray rolling fog. At the harbor's edge, the north-side boundary of the field, flying visibility went out, ended. When our lumbering, rumbling wheels left the mud and a bump and hump sent us into the air the murk reached out and gathered us in; it was with a sickening suddenness akin to the black art. So deftly were we betrayed, so oozily did the cold clammy sky claim us as its own.

A pea-green mass of faintly sun-shot clouds shifted and lazily billowed below and above and all around. Now and then the blurred outlines of a familiar landmark whisked wetly past—the cliffs, Lighthouse Point, then the sea. Now came those miles and hours of doubt and fear, a cold wet mental blanket for me, a time of excitement for the others.

Rutter had flown the take-off. Once outside the Heads, he settled and brought the plane very close to the surface of the sea. At times he intorted a line-of-flight in conformity with the rise and fall of the waves. We sunk low into the vasty troughs; outguessed the shifting waters. The two adventurers were exalted by the stunt.

"Altitude!" I barked in Rutter's ear. We were sitting side by side in the front cockpit. "Get a little altitude! Cut out this——monkey-business! I can't navigate with this compass swinging in circles. Cut it, Rutter—cut it!"

In the event of motor trouble, altitude—even the thought that you have some altitude—is a solace.

"Altitude?" he questioned. "What do we want with altitude. Boy, if this old motor konks out here we're not going to need any of that altitude stuff. We're not going anywhere but down. You won't find any landing places. She's one of the biggest oceans in America. Mac, if she quits you are done."

He made a personal thing of the "you," as if to exclude Miller and himself.

A few minutes later Rutter shook the controls in warning. It is the usual way of designating that one pilot is turning the flying over to the other. Then, without looking back or receiving the customary return signal, he removed his hands and feet from the joy-stick and rudder-bar.

He assumed that Miller was flying. Instinctively, the latter had taken charge and now picked the foam-white crest of a wind-blown wave to follow. He followed it so low that the propeller, catching the water beads, laced them back, cuttingly, into our faces. They laughed.

So through miles of crowding peril the plane plied its swift course west.

"Down! Down! Down!" they would shout in unison whenever an opposing mountain of water rolled up before us. "Down, wave—down!"

And they would wait it out, till the last second, before zooming. Then, outdoing each the other in daring, they flew and flew; bound to mix a certain measure of fun with the danger.

During one of those crazy minutes, we found ourselves trapped. Rutter was flying again. That time, without warning, the sea walled high before us and would not down. The plane's zoom would not have sufficed to clear the mountainous comber at so short a climb; Rutter banked, ozomed and turned to the left. There, in the deep vortex, another incubus of rolling sea towered above. He wheeled and turned and climbed; the motor's frenzied roar came back from the deep sinks with demoniac shriek. Our chances looked slim.

Say that those waves could not have been more than fifty feet high at the crest, and you have an argument on hand. I'll split the difference and say that the trough was no deeper than the Grand Canyon.

When Rutter boot-strapped out of that mazy bedlam it was with the smile nicely erased, yet he managed to chirp—"Boy, you were close to your Maker for a few seconds that time."

But the situation had been sort of an anti-maniacal sedative and had stopped their begoggled mumming for a gasp or two at least.

Then again, without signaling Miller to relieve him, Rutter relinquished his hold on the control-stick, bent low into the cockpit and attempted to light a cigaret. At upward of one hundred miles per hour and hardly fifteen feet above the water, the plane raced on, free. Two or three matches failed. Finally, after what seemed like hours, he came up smiling, the cigaret aglow in the murk.

When the second hour ended, with visibility extending only to the water, I again spoke to Rutter:

"Two hours are down. Half our gasoline is gone. We can turn back now and just make land." He made me repeat it time and again—acted as though my proposition were hard to understand.

"That's the way you vote?" he finally asked. "You're for making a turn around —want to go back?"

"Yes," I blurted out. His voice had not been derisive; without hesitation I made my stand. "I'm for it right now! We haven't a chance in ten million. This fog reaches China!"

"Well, you're entitled to one vote."

He turned the throttle to full and zoomed into the black canopy of storm. When the plane had reached three hundred feet altitude, in the abrupt climb, Rutter leveled off and silenced his motor, throttled. And, half-turning in his seat, yelled to Miller:

"We're two hours out. We can get back if we turn now—is it turn or do we keep on going?"

By then, with idling motor, the plane had glided back to the surface. Rutter threw full power to it, and the direction was west. In a voice that must have echoed from pole to pole, Miller had declared—

"Till —— freezes over and thaws out again—keep going!"

"It can't last forever, Mac." Minutes and miles had passed before Rutter spoke. "There's just so much fog in the world and we've been through most of it so it can't last much longer."

He was right; the fog ended. When we flew out of the murky wet mess it was with the suddenness of a train quitting a stinking smoky tunnel. One moment our nerves had been fine-spun and at the break our outlook had been hopeless. In

the next moment we bolted into the clear. It was cloudlessly clear.

A tremendous awe transcended all other thought and business at hand. Towering behind, walled north and south, clean-cut and abrupt, stood a stygian curtain of fog, while afront skies were high and bright.

It was well after six and the December day had all but gone west. For brief transplendent moments, a beaten sun reddened the sea's distant edge with a crimson fanlight. Then its ascending, fading illumination shot high on the fog, and—darkness. It was night. It had come—not with a stride, but with a jump! A star hung here—now one there—cold, tinseled stars, everywhere; streetlights they seemed of some vast necropolis.

Sky and sea met in purple blur of neutral tint; then welded into one. And the visibility of the waters, for any workable distance, ended. And hope with it.

It was all so awful—that coming and passing of hope; a mental tourniquet to check expectation and resign one to despair; a thing to bring dread.

And Rutter and Miller—to think that men could face that and still smile. They never faltered.

"Would you have missed that minute for a million, Mac?" Rutter asked and reverently lapsed into awed silence.

"Gang," Miller throttled low to exult, "gang, you'll never see a sight like that again; ain't you birds glad you're here?"

Though they had no need of it, the awful splendor of the minute had nerved them anew. Had you opened both their skulls, you wouldn't have found enough responsibility in their brains to equip a half-wit. Glad to be there? Rats! Wish to —— I'd never even been back in the Army!

The fear of death is a minor thing compared with the humiliating dread of being lowered in the estimation of one's betters; that hour I knew such a fear in all its worst forms. If in the next and last hour of our flight I failed to pick up the ships and went beyond— Well, I quailed. I could never have faced the minute of failure, the minute when, with gasoline exhausted, those two would turn to me for an accounting of my stewardship. And in all justice they might well do so.

Every change of flying direction they had made as I had ordered, even when their own dashboard compasses seemed to advise otherwise. No; they had never hesitated. So in the event of failure—

"Don't do so much stationary thinking—" Rutter elbowed me out of coma—"you're not an official; are we still headed west?"

West it was. At least, I thought and hoped so. Shortly after dark, we passed a lumber freighter, coastwise, plying south, which poured its smoke along our line-of-flight, west. And the westward-blown smoke removed the ever-present fear of side-winds and side-drift.

The freighter taught us plenty. One moment we gazed into the red inferno of her single stack. The next, as she rolled deep and keeled half her bottom to the sky, we watched the screw and rudder flash in the clear. Then she was gone, and, indelibly, we realized that the storm had not subsided one whit.

Thinking of the freighter's crew, I asked—

"Bet we surprized them. Wonder what they think?"

"They don't," Rutter said, "or they wouldn't follow that dangerous life."

At seven the sky was on the water again. While the fog—ragged and on the blow—wasn't as solid as formerly, it was still heavy enough to force us back to the surface. To make matters worse the flaming exhaust stacks of the motor, hot and aglow along either side of the cockpits, interfered with flying visibility beyond a short radius. And guesswork, where little room for guesswork remained, was our chief stock in trade.

With three hours down, our minute of life was close at hand. Even Rutter had sobered and, ever on the alert, scanned the sea and stared the fog. He displayed no anxiety—explained that there was only worry enough for one, and said that I

could handle that—but he was missing nothing. Once or twice, out of the black, we picked up fictitious ships, and knew bitter disappointment when we placed them as such. It was hard to see them vanish, hard to realize that time was vanishing, too.

At seven-thirty, pointing to the dashboard clock, Rutter slowly said:

"Mac, you have just about thirty minutes to make good. I'm for you, but if you fail, well— May there be a curse on your head." He looked around, studied the wings and added, "We should have brought an umbrella."

The struts and surfaces were dripping; we had flown into rain.

The rain cleared the atmosphere some. The fog and clouds lightened but our weight of oppression did not. The rain had found its way to the motor's ignition. Some of the twelve cylinders were "cutting out;" commenced to spit and sputter. A vise seemed to grip my chest coldly. Its chill climbed to my throat, to my ears. The game was up—no two ways about it now. We were done!

Rutter heard, too—of course he heard—but he ignored the motor's irregularity. After a while, he leaned forward and pretended that he was dialing the instrument board's glass crystals.

"Static," he finally explained. "It's only static; you get it on the best machines. Miller'll tune it out if I can't."

Miller, doing the flying, spurted his motor, rocked the spark, pumped air, worked fast and tried everything. But he didn't tune it out. No bets! She was going bad, fast. I froze—just mildewed. Man, what an end!

"To——with it!" Rutter shouted. If fear was there, it was incognito. "We don't need all twelve barrels at this altitude and there's no hurry. She'll fly a long time on six. As far as we're going, anyway. Now, where's that ship you were going to find for—"

"It's there! Great God! They're there, Rutter!"

I can still feel him pulling me back into the cockpit and forcing me into the seat with:

"You can't walk on water; perhaps they're more of your phantom ships. Keep your shirt on!"

These were not phantom ships. Not this time! Miles apart, and miles to our north, almost overlooked and passed, two stacks belched orange-tongued flare-ups into the night. Now the failing motor and the rain and all things else counted not a bit.

"I've got to celebrate!" Rutter shook for the controls and Miller gave them over. "I'm going to do my stuff."

He climbed and climbed. The motor labored, missed and sputtered. Altitude came hard, slowly.

"Why the altitude?" I asked as we neared the ships. "Let Miller take it down and pile it up. Have it over with!"

"Got to celebrate!" Rutter repeated. "Got to let them know we're here—going to loop a few nasty loops so's they'll see us." Then, pretending to search, he peered under the seat and all around, guardedly asking, "You don't see old super Googan any place? Don't want him to see me loop this old mail plane."

At a thousand feet he looped, and at eight hundred, having lost the difference in the first try, he looped again. The fire-vomiting, retarded motor flamed and smoked great serpentine circles in the gloom. So he looped once more. And the altimeter had fallen to the five-hundred-foot reading.

"No more, you——fool! No more!"

Enough was enough; I reached out and shoved his control stick forward to the instrument board and leveled the plane's flight, preventing another trip.

"Miller! Miller!" I called. "You take it, Miller."

Rutter, stretching his feet to the instrument board, roared with mirth. He fell to kicking the glass dials, breaking them from their instruments. Glass dials in a crash are nasty things. Miller, clearing decks in like manner, had broken out the glassware of his cockpit.

The second ship had doused its lights

and was starving its fires in order that we might know that it was not our destination. The tramp sent up rockets and flared its funnel anew. Nosed into the stubborn head-wind and wallowing deep, it gave Miller something hard to aim at. The oily water reflected the ship's lights and the work was laid out.

Miller dropped down-wind, from the five-hundred-foot level at which he had relieved Rutter. Then he turned the plane east again, and came up into the retarding sixty-mile-per-hour blow and toward his landing place.

The forward progress against that wind was very, very slow.

"Get set!" Miller yelled above the swishing hum of wires and struts. Over my shoulder I watched his lips as he throttled low. "And if I never see you boys again—it's been a large-sized evening, and good-by!"

The glare-encompassed ship came up, slowly. Slowly, with motor nearly stopped and the plane side-slipping against the terrific wind, we stalled and lost altitude. A good pilot flying into such a head-on blow can sidle and settle at a stagger. Miller was good—he looped bridges as a pastime. I was glad that he had looped bridges; we conservative birds are no good in tight places.

In purblind confusion I watched and waited; watched the ship come close—that ship with all its tons of hard steel deck. I felt Rutter's breath on my cheek. He was kidding me.

"Take good care of your lucky goggles, Mac—put them next to your heart."

His kidding and the ship's pitching opposition seemed to make the agony eternal. I removed my goggles and covered my head and face with arms and hands—got set for that crash. Then, till the last, I could still visualize that confused conglomeration of lights, glistening wet decks and flaming funnel. The heat from the funnel's hellish flare-up filled the moment.

Then came the smashing stop. It was worse than I had expected; and it had to be mighty bad to be that.

For a fluttering second, with motor dead and hearts stopped, we had covered one hundred feet above the rolling tramp; then, as if she were attacking, the ship mounted a comber and rushed us. A spar, somewhere forward, speared us on the wing. It came through both left wings, and, pivoting at that point, our weight and momentum whirled the plane around the mast and down to the deck in wreckage.

As our free right wings swung toward the pilot house, I saw men falling back and leaving the bridge. Men were running for cover on the deck below. A sea was smashing over the bow and reaching for us; and at my side a madman was shouting, "Ride 'em, cowboy!" And all the lights and noise got together and went out; then returned with quiet, softer glow.

COMING through a shell of semi-coma, there rasped well known voices, voices that served to hook up a quiet, floating present with the hectic past. I knew enough to know that I had been knocked cold—I'd been there before, out by the same route. With those voices came the deadly knowledge that the worst two of the four horsemen were still riding.

Mixed with a tinkling of chains, ship's bells and paced decks, Miller was talking:

"He'll be all right, Ann; the old boy has plenty of vitality; it's the ether that's making him sick today. He'll pull through O. K."

Rutter was also talking there and asking:

"When will this old stiff come to, Doc? I didn't think that they were ever knocked cold for so many hours."

He spoke of me. And Miller, I think, worked over me.

When, just about then, my imparadised lethargy ended and I came to, it was with little interest in anything. Seasickness had moved in while I was out. Man! What wouldn't I have given to be able to run it backward as they do in the movies; back through the coma and the crash and

the lights and the zoom—into the air once more. Sea travel! Who ever spoke of sea travel and its soothing quiet?

The storm had blown itself out and west. The biggest ocean in America was as advertised by that discoverer of sea-sickness, Vasco Nuñez de Balboa—pacific and dolesome. This, I knew, was another day.

"How are you feeling, Mac?" Rutter was alone in my stateroom.

"Lafayette, we are here!" they say I answered.

"The —— you are!" Rutter laughed. "That makes five of us; we're quite a crowd."

"Five?" I remember asking, beginning to come out of my dope, "Rutter, didn't I hear Miller talking here a few minutes before I woke up? Who was he talking to? He said Ann—"

"Ann Boots, that's right! It was her old man had the bellyache. Miller did a good job. And now he's making up for ten lost years—working fast with Ann. She was on the transport with the old gent."

"How does Miller seem to be cutting it?"

"There's a whiff of orange blossoms in the air right now."

"——, I thought it was ether!"

ALAN LEMAY

Gives us more of

Painted

WHEN "Slide" Morgan reined his tired horse into Roaring River on the Overland Trail to Salt Lake City he was broke but for a silver dollar. That night the roulette wheel replenished his fortune to the tune of several thousands, but he incurred the enmity of Lew Cade whose brother, Abner, ruled the town.

Friends spirited him away that night, and next day he reached the ranch of the Texan, John Chase, who employed him as a rider. Slide hid four thousand dollars under the floor of his bunk that night. Nancy Chase, young and pretty, made Morgan wish to stay, but old John fired him after a week, under suspicion that he was a half-breed. When Slide returned a few nights later, with proof of his white blood, he saw Nancy in the arms of Lew Cade. In the fight which followed Slide mortally wounded the gambler.

Abner Cade took up the task of avenging his brother and Morgan fled to the prairie. A rifle battle ensued in which the fugitive was wounded in the wrist but saved from capture by the intervention of some roving Cheyennes. At first the Indians were suspicious of Slide as they were off reservation and fearful of discovery, but when they realized that he was an outlaw and friendly to their tribe they agreed to take him to camp, where the leader of the Cheyenne scouts finally decided to allow Morgan to accompany them.

Jake Downey, who had given his best mount, the black horse, to Slide and who, except for "Talky" Peters, was Morgan's best friend, was questioning Peters as to the whereabouts of their absent comrade when the black head of a horse appeared in the doorway, then withdrew. Then the doorway framed the figure of Abner Cade. He had brought back Ironhead whom he had found on the prairie; now he threatened to kill Jake for aiding Morgan and demanded that Talky come with him as a prisoner of the Vigilantes.

"Try an' take him—if yuh ain't afeared!" snapped Downey.

But Cade seemed not to want to try, at least that time. He turned and left the cabin.

CHAPTER XIII

DRUMS OF WAR

ALL afternoon they had rested at the foot of a great butte that stood in an endless plain, blazing white in the sun. Prone on the craggy edge of the butte the lookout lay, his back almost smoking in the dry heat. There was no slow resignation in the movements of the men sent to relieve the watcher now—at Hunting Dog's word the scouts

A SERIAL

of Uncertain Borders

Ponies

rose as one, each eager to be the one chosen to scale his way a hundred feet upward, out of the shade into the blazing heat of the upper level.

Unquestionably the Indians were waiting for something. Ordinarily they would have slept like dogs, whatever the discomforts—today Morgan was the only one who dozed. They sat alert, their eyes keenly questioning the plain. None lay down, yet even in their alert attitudes there was a certain suggestion of fatality, of habit. It made Morgan feel that they had often sat thus in this place before, only to go away again without the answer to the question that they never spoke.

Between painfully squinting lids Morgan studied the background of savage, living rock against which the Indians sat and his eyes, sharpened already by many weeks' association with the scouts, found the signs that he sought. Here behind him was a darkened place where the exposed rock of the butte had been touched with the breath of smoke; there, above, a broken stone had been a little loosened by climbing feet—

He speculated on how long these wandering homeless scouts had been coming here. For months—years? What vision turned their eyes so steadily southward? What was it they half hoped, half dreaded would some time keep the tryst—man, or God, or devil?

Of one thing he was certain: In the steady southward gaze of these Cheyennes was none of the light of sadness with which men of all races look toward a distant home.

Pondering futilely, Morgan presently sank into a heavy sleep.

HE MUST have slept a long while, for when he next sat up he saw that there remained only that pellucid gentle light which lies coolly upon the barren country long after the sun has set. There was a smooth silence yet he knew that the air had become electric, and now he saw that the Indians were on their feet. Hunting Dog stood with folded arms where he had sat, facing the south. His face was controlled, but the pinched quiver of a nostril told Morgan of the man's nervous strain.

Strong Neck, Feather, Blanket and Laughing Coyote stood farther out upon the plain at irregular intervals, as if drawn there from where they had sat by an irresistible hypnotic force—they, too, faced southward. From time to time one or another turned to speak to a comrade excitedly, but for long moments they stood more motionless than the sage-brush itself, which the hot wind breathed upon and moved as it breathed.

Morgan stood up and swept the plain

with his eyes; and presently he made out in the distance a wisp of dust, obscured by the dim haze of evening. At first it seemed motionless but after a time it could be perceived to drift and break, then rise to drift again.

Now the Otter came scrambling down the face of the butte, his eyes glittering. Hunting Dog looked at him questioningly, and the Otter answered with a swift jerk of his head that emphasized his resemblance to a great hawk. Then the Otter, pulled by that irresistible force, joined the four others that stood out on the plain.

The long minutes passed; the motionless watching Indians reminded Morgan of people who watch some strange phenomenon of the skies, so intently interested were they, yet so quiet and stoically resigned in the hands of fate. Long afterward Morgan remembered this, recalling how intently he himself, without comprehension, had watched the approach of one whose message bore the destiny of a people.

A speck became visible beneath the thin, dimming drift of dust, a speck that grew to a dot; and so furiously rode the man who approached that in a few minutes more even Morgan could make out the horse itself.

Blanket, ever calm and cynically wise beyond his years, was the first to turn away.

"It'll be a long time yet," he said; "he still has a long way to come. Let's build a fire, and get ready to cook our meat."

One by one they reluctantly turned and followed Blanket back to the shadow of the butte. With many a long glance toward the distant rider, the scouts gathered dried buffalo chips and thick stems of sage, their hands made quick by their suppressed excitement. In a few moments they had a little conical fire going; it burned with a small bright flame that gave almost no smoke at all. Feather began to cut the evening's supply of meat.

Almost half an hour later, just as the last twilight was giving way to the little light of the prairie stars, the rider came up.

The scouts held back until they could restrain themselves no more, then dashed out to meet the messenger. The high-feathered flare of a war bonnet shone above the pony's outstretched neck. The horse itself was in bad case, so drenched with sweat and lather that his original color was indistinguishable. Blood streaked the slathering foam that dripped from the animal's mouth, his eyes showed bloodshot whites and, through nostrils strained to great blood-red cavities, the breath heaved in painful surges.

The swift Otter, ahead of the others, seized the bridle of the running horse, dragging down its great laboring bounds and as the pony strove to answer the dragging bridle its knees suddenly buckled under it, and it crumpled headlong. Blanket had already pulled the rider into his arms from the animal's back, joyously holding him close, supporting the Indian's stiff uncertain step as they moved toward the fire and Hunting Dog.

Twice the ruined pony threw up his head, struggling with his forelegs to rise; then his legs trembled and stiffened and his head flailed to the ground.

Hunting Dog, the last of them all to move, now came running up, flinging his arms about this man whose horse had died to bring him, and with Blanket helped the exhausted man to the fire.

The rider looked back over his shoulder to his fallen pony.

"He's the fourth," the Indian said.

He laid down his Winchester carbine, and for a moment stood wearily. Hunting Dog now flung aside a saddle blanket, revealing a gun—the Sharps carbine owned by the Otter—and beside it a long-stemmed pipe. All except the rider now sat down crosslegged in a semicircle about the pipe and gun, to one side of the fire. The rider stooped stiffly to touch the pipe.

"They're coming," he said in a strong vibrant voice. "Morning Star, Little Wolf, and all that are left of our people are on the march. We fought hard with

the soldiers near the agency just before I came here. On the way I have learned that there is a great deal of cavalry moving to attack the people. Morning Star has many horses, many guns, he is moving fast, and can fight hard. But every man is needed. Twenty-seven warriors died of fever since you left, and women, children and old men without count."

"*Ahohya!*" exclaimed Hunting Dog. "Twenty-seven!" And Blanket sucked in his breath.

"The people are very lean," said the rider with the war bonnet. "Many are sick. But the warriors fought without fear of the soldier's guns. And now that we are moving northward there'll be plenty of food."

"White Shield," said Hunting Dog, addressing the messenger, "are we to meet them with many horses, or go to them at once?"

"You are to come at once," said White Shield. "Little Wolf expects fighting almost every day for a while. Neither he nor Morning Star wish to fight any more than they have to. But now every gun is needed."

His eyes rested on Morgan's in a long stare, but he questioned neither by word nor by expression.

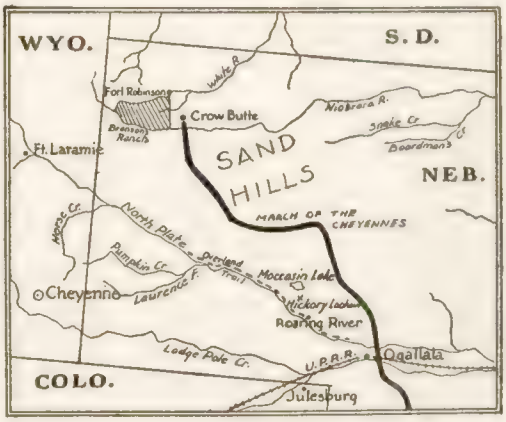
"Give him a blanket to sit on," said Hunting Dog. "Where is there water?"

Morgan passed the bonneted Cheyenne his own canteen and the man drank greedily before he sat down on the blanket spread for him by Feather.

The cowboy looked about into the faces of the Cheyennes, faces beginning to show the seams that hard weather leaves, even in their youth. A day before they had been relaxed, careless; often gay, always alert, yet primarily passive, bespeaking the rigor of lives which had taught them to steal rest where rest could be found. Now all that was gone. Their quick eyes gleamed with a hard, joyous light; their faces were at once illuminated and grimly stern.

And as he looked at the change in these familiar bronze faces, the realization of what the message of White Shield meant came upon Morgan with a great surging thrill. Here was war, bringing hate and bloodlust and death. The old bitter hatred between red and white had once more burst into fierce ravaging flames. Again the cabins of lonely settlers would lie in smoking ruins, and night and day tired cowboys would guard the remudas and the stock.

A great doubt stirred deep within him, filling him with dread. Who was Slide Morgan, he asked himself—white or red? If it were in any wise the latter, then it



was both, and this Morgan was a wind-tossed thing without name or people. He stared into the bronze faces again, half dreading to see that his own face was mirrored there and that they were blood of his blood.

Instead, he found that never had he been farther removed from them. Here, in the test of war, it suddenly came to Morgan with its full force that he and these men with whom he had ridden were of utterly different breeds.

Yet they had been his friends, though they were red; and his own people now sought his life for the sake of the cash offer of Abner Cade. And even as he knew the Cheyenne people could never be his, he realized that the end had not come between them, that he must still ride a while with these primitive warriors, though

it meant making their battle his own. It was with a free mind that he acknowledged this, a mind in which there was no thought of restraint. Put to the test, Morgan would blithely have taken a chance with the death that threatened his first effort to escape.

While these vague snapshots at reason were racing through Morgan's mind, the circle about the gun and the pipe had fallen silent. For a moment there was not a move nor a whisper among the seven Cheyenne scouts.

Then Hunting Dog began a low chant, a wailing song in a rhythmic beat, sung without words; the other scouts joined in. The song rose and fell, an eery, pleading dirge that seemed to ask mercy of the gods of the plain, begging for yet another brief postponement of the stark death that meant outer darkness and the end of earth.

Then the chant quickened into an angry war-dance beat—against the background of the wind that whispered over the sage the chant rose stronger, snarling and threatening. It was as if these weird human voices embodied the spirit of wolves that set long noses into the bitter winds and struggled savagely against destiny, answering the merciless plain with the merciless will to endure.

The wild chant rose and rose, until one terrible war-cry burst from Blanket, a snarling eagle scream of wrath and battle. Then the chant fell away to the mournful, droning repetition of a single off-key note, and ceased.

For some moments after the medicine song had died away the Indians sat motionless and silent. Each seemed to stare at the man opposite him with unseeing eyes. Only Hunting Dog looked from one to another of the proud harsh faces, and he seemed pleased with what he saw there. The scout chief now turned his eyes to Morgan and with a slight movement of one finger pointed to the fire and the meat.

Morgan immediately began to cook slabs of beef, propping them over the dying fire with sticks of tough sage. Presently Feather left the circle and came to help him.

Hunting Dog said—

"Who are among the dead?"

"At the agency there died Good Wolf," said White Shield.

"*Ahohya!*" exclaimed several; for this man had been a chief.

"The day before he died he asked for food. He was wasted and gaunt with his sickness. The beef ration was late. There was nothing to give him, for all had starved for three days. The next day his shadow left him and he lay dead, though his heart beat for one day more.

"Others that have died are Beaver River, Bear Claws, Gun, Crooked Finger, Rearing Horse, Crazy Bear, Sand, Spotted Elk and Four Wings. Panther took his own life. He was sick for a long time; some thought that his shadow was already gone. Long Head died; and Powder, Red Moon, Blind Mule, Bird Walker, Rib, Snow, Bull Trail. The wife of Black Robe is dead, and the wife of Tall Man. Light Behind the Cloud has lost his three sons. There are many more."

"*Ahohya,*" ran the murmur about the circle, for White Shield had named friends, relatives, brothers, and men whose every deed of war was known to all of them.

"All by the fever?" Hunting Dog asked.

"Every one. Of those I have named not one died in battle or in any other way. Red Thunder and the medicine-men saved many. But more have died than you could believe. I'll tell you more names as I think of them."

"We can believe well enough," Hunting Dog answered. "We saw two winters there, with the death chant in every lodge. Yet the summers were worse. Ha! I remember that more than sixty people were sick before we had been there two moons."

"They wished to kill us when they sent us there," said the Otter bitterly. "No war path ever cost us so much as living in that place. We should have fought our way out before."

"We may all be killed yet," said Hunting Dog soberly.

"We would all die anyway," said White Shield.

The Indians fell upon the fresh meat, bolting it hungrily.

Presently, after he had eaten, Blanket produced a small drum, scarcely more than a little hoop with hide stretched over it, and began to beat upon it with his thumbs.

Slowly the rhythm of the drum throb began to work its way into the souls of the Cheyennes, stimulating the exultant war mood that was upon them. Strong Neck, a man with powerful shoulders and a flat face, sang a few notes of a high-pitched chant. Thereafter, for a time, as they continued to eat, one or another of them repeated the high eery sequence of notes, to the rhythm of the drum. And at last Blanket began to chant in a lower, harsher key. The tempo of the drum increased and the Otter and Laughing Coyote began to chant with Blanket.

Suddenly Feather sprang to his feet and began to dance, shifting his weight heavily in a jogging, short-stepped trot, his head so low that the bound tails of his thick hair trailed upon the ground before him. It was night now—the faint radiance of the stars took the harsh edge off the dark, but the flickering orange glow of the fire supplied the only light by which a man could see. It glinted upon the greased black braids of Feather's hair, and played over the writhing, clean-carved muscles of his naked back.

Soon the Otter sprang up and followed Feather; then Strong Neck and Blanket, who gave his drum to Laughing Coyote. Lastly White Shield joined the ring that circled the fire, his weariness forgotten.

The war-bonneted White Shield, sleek and clean-cut, presented a figure in strong contrast to those of the travel-frayed scouts. As he danced the long white eagle feathers of his war bonnet, black-tipped and ending each in a tiny tuft of red-dyed down, swayed and tossed in a dance of their own. From the back of the tall head-dress a long tail of other eagle feathers trailed over the satiny smooth bronze skin of his shoulders and naked back.

The heat was heavy upon them and the other Indians cast off the oddments of white men's clothing that they wore. Feather flung aside the broad Stetson rim, Strong Neck his hat, Blanket his ragged blue shirt and overalls.

Naked, now, save for breech clouts and moccasins, Hunting Dog's scouts danced to the rhythm of the pulsating drum in the shadow of the looming butte. Against the towering rock wall the shadows leaped, many times larger than men. The sweat rolled from the muscle-rippled skin of their backs, and still they danced, intoxicated by the driving song of the drum, the wailing chant and their dreams of war. On and on, sometimes swiftly, until the dance was like the whirling of wind-caught leaves; sometimes slowly, ploddingly, like trail-weary ponies, or buffaloes on a long trek; on and on—

Here was the sort of thing Morgan had heard of but never seen. This was the sort of savage ceremony with which they worked themselves into a frenzy of wrath and hate, preparing themselves to raid and burn, to torture and pillage and kill.

As the drum throbbed on, something began to stir within the man who watched, some ancient forgotten emotion that turned in its sleep in answer to the persistent fluttering rumble of the drum, singing like thunder far away. The harsh, wailing chant raised his hair, yet it irresistibly turned his thought to his wrongs. There was a hypnotic element in the weird ceremony in its rough setting of vast plains, looming butte and the far-off watching stars. The shifting figures against the firelight were but partly seen, and beyond them, half veiled—something else.

He shook his head like a dog coming out of the water, but there was no escaping the muffled murmuring thunder of the drum. One at a time the Indians flung themselves to the ground to rest, but as the second dropped the first was

up again. Only Hunting Dog sat apart, as if husbanding his strength, his face a mask.

There was no flicker of pain in Slide's stiffened right hand, yet he could feel again the savage tearing shock as the ricocheting bullet streaked across his wrist. Once more he could see his own blood, drawn by his people that had turned against him; it ran from his fingers in drops that quickened to a pulsing stream. He could hear the bark of the searching guns, see the silhouetted, closing riders and among them, weary but implacable, the solid figure of Abner Cade.

He saw again the pale cynical eyes of Abner's brother, the man whom in that swift, fated instant he had struck to his death. He saw the serene face of Nancy Chase, a memory momentarily so poignant that Slide almost cried aloud. He saw her in Lew Cade's arms, and the world surged red—

Perhaps Laughing Coyote saw the savage light in Morgan's eyes. In any case, when Morgan could see the Cheyennes again, the Coyote's eyes were boring into him.

"Dance! Dance!" the Indian yelled across the small space between them. "Up, Red Talker!"

In the madness of the war drum's spell, Morgan all but sprang to his feet. An almost irresistible urge rose within him to dance contorted about the dying embers with the rest, chanting out his anger, hate and sorrow to the age-old rhythm of the drum. Laughing Coyote suddenly made the drum pulse swell to a wild flurry, a thundering tattoo. The energy of the dancing redoubled and at the height of the chant savage war cries split the air from Blanket, White Shield, Strong Neck and the Otter.

Morgan half raised, as if drawn by a force beyond himself, almost he flung himself among the naked figures.

The chant was subsiding now; the drum's tattoo sunk to a dull throbbing, and the dance to a wearied jog. One by one the dancers dropped aside and stretched upon the ground. Feather heaped the sulking embers of the fire and smothered them with fresh meat.

The dance, the spontaneous outpouring of the Indian spirit, was done.

HAVING heavily gorged again the Indians slept, motionless, huskily breathing forms which the dying glow of the little fire no longer touched.

But Slide Morgan could not sleep, and after a long time spent in tight-eyed struggle with the memories that swarmed over his mind he raised upon his elbow and looked about.

Hunting Dog sat and smoked. Slide could see the glowing coal of the Indian's short tube of a pipe as the scout chief inhaled. It seemed that this man who had been too weary to dance was not yet tired enough to sleep. Indeed, in almost six weeks with the Cheyenne scouts Morgan had seldom seen Hunting Dog more than doze fitfully. In a safe place there might be no guards and few other precautions, but the scout chief himself slept only in light snatches—or smoked through the watches of the night.

On a sudden impulse Morgan got up, and went to lounge beside Hunting Dog.

It was an odd indication of the aloof friendship that Morgan had grown to feel for this man that when he spoke it was in the words he would have used in addressing Jake Downey or Talky Peters.

"Bucks jumped the reservation, eh?" he said.

He could see Hunting Dog's head turn slowly toward him in the dark, but there was no answer. Then Morgan suddenly realized that he had spoken in his own language; and in view of the way he had put the question, he was glad.

"Why are the Tsis-tsis-tas leaving home?" he asked presently.

Hunting Dog did not answer for so long that Morgan thought the Indian meant to ignore him.

"Not leaving home," hunting Dog answered at last. "Going home."

There was a long pause, then the scout chief repeated the words—

"Going home."

"Where is that?" Morgan asked simply.

"You have never heard of Morning Star?"

"No."

Hunting Dog appeared to think, then spoke a word so foreign to Morgan's knowledge of Cheyenne that he believed it must be of another tongue. Then, after many moments, Hunting Dog unexpectedly wrenched out two words in English—

"Dull Knife!"

"Dull Knife? Morning Star is Dull Knife?"

"Morning Star is his real name. Dull Knife is the name the Sioux use."

"Do you speak English?" Morgan demanded suddenly.

"No. I only happened to get the name 'Dull Knife' at the agency."

The name was one that Morgan knew, and after a moment's thought the story came back to him.

Dull Knife was the chief who had waged a bitter war in the Black Hills, harassing the miners that had flooded this old Indian range in response to word of gold. He had seized wagon trains, it was said, burned cabins, raided, robbed, and killed. Some said that this half-legendary figure had taken a hand in the destruction of Custer's command on the Little Big Horn. A thousand atrocities were credited to his name.

When his village had been captured the whole northern border had breathed deeply with relief. The common white opinion from the Platte north—and south—was that "the whole kit an' b'ilin' of 'em orter be shot first-off!"

That had been two years ago. At the time Morgan had agreed with general opinion. Now—he looked at things differently these days.

In one of the treaties which the Government never kept, the Indians had been promised the Black Hills. Conceivably a man had a right to fight for his land.

Even Custer, come to think of it, when he was "massacred in cold blood," was in the act of attacking a Sioux village that had been hiding away.

After his own experience with the persistent malice of his breed, many things looked different in Morgan's eyes.

Then a new curiosity occurred to him.

"But Dull Knife belonged in the Black Hills, and thereabouts. How did he ever get way down south o' here?"

"We wanted to stay north. The soldiers wanted us to come south. They argued a long time. None of us would give in. Tall Bull was speaking for us. Suddenly Tall Bull said we would let them take us south. We were astonished. But he had said we would go south with them. So we went."

"It's no good down there?"

Hunting Dog held his silence for a long time; but when he answered his voice was bleakly calm.

"For us it is a land of death. Of six hundred who went there two summers ago, almost three hundred are dead. A hundred and twenty died the first year—His voice trailed off, as if his eyes were upon distant, indescribable things.

"When they saw you were dying, wouldn't they let you move?"

"We have begged, over and over again. Little Wolf has been to Washington; he knows about the way the soldiers are run. The Indian agent said he sent word to his Great Father in Washington. I don't know. But if he did, then the Great Father refused."

There was such bitter irony in the scout chief's voice as he spoke of the "Great Father" that the most savage denunciations could have added nothing more. When Hunting Dog spoke again, after a long time, his voice quivered with an intensity of wrath.

"My wife is dead. Two baby daughters and one little son so high—" he indicated the height of a child of three or four—"died in these arms. They want us all to die! They hem us in with rifles in a place where none of us can survive!"

Behind his voice was the wrath of desperation, the desperation of a cornered people, beaten, baffled, dying, shorn of

all hope—yet still a people that would not give up.

"Well, we will die, perhaps! But we will die with our weapons in our hands!"

CHAPTER XIV

DULL KNIFE'S CHEYENNES

IT WAS almost a week before Hunting Dog's party met the traveling village of Morning Star, the chief who to the world was Dull Knife.

They came unexpectedly—to Morgan, at least—out of a cool gray dawn, a loose, long-trailing column, followed by a remuda of nearly five hundred head of horse. The scouts had ridden since shortly after midnight, perhaps informed by some far sign of the nearness of the village. Certainly Hunting Dog's party evinced no surprize at the ghostly gray cavalcade that came on with daybreak.

Morgan's first apprisal of their presence came with a faint murmur, a bare moaning whisper along the ground. The far sound swelled into a distant mutter, like a deep-voiced wind in far-away pines; then to a steady muffled thunder, the beat of thousands of hoofs upon the prairie turf.

Then over a far ridge appeared a narrow dark shape, that grew and lengthened toward them down the long sag of ground, and Morgan could make out the shuffling bob of galloping horses, although it was yet too dim to see the drifting dust clouds from the hoofs.

Now a short joyous shout went up from the scouts and suddenly lashing their horses they charged toward the head of the column on the dead run. As they neared, Morgan watched the lengthening of the column that poured over the ridge with perhaps the deepest thrill he had ever known. He had expected numbers, but as he watched the long file pour and pour and pour over that low ridge the full sweep of the thing took him for the first time. Here was a whole tribe, a fighting people in the saddle, riding out of a land of death through a gauntlet of United States troops—fighting their way home!

They were traveling at a steady hand-gallop, just beyond a canter; here and there a horse would drop into a hard trot for a few rods, then be forced into the gallop again to keep up. Morgan, accustomed to the trot as the regular gait for distance covering, could not understand how the Cheyennes expected to hold such a pace in a long march; later he learned that the Indians found means. In all the world there were no finer horsemen than the northern Cheyennes of Morning Star.

The last of the long column and its big close-running remuda crossed the ridge and Morgan could make out a dozen outriders behind the last horses and to the sides. As they drew closer the cowboy could see the dim individual shapes in the trailing file and see the dust that purled in misty clouds from the horses' feet, drifting off to the side like smoke puffs in the breeze.

An old man, dressed in war bonnet, buckskin shirt and leggings, and riding a tall bay horse of splendid stride, led the column. This, Morgan believed, would be Morning Star, and in this he was right. The scouts charged full at this man, right arms raised high, and he welcomed them by the same sign. Then at the last instant they whirled their horses and rode abreast.

As they came close to the chief the Indian's eyes ran quickly over them, and for an instant rested on the face of Morgan. The cowboy's horse was at this moment pressed close to the horse of Morning Star, so that for a fleeting second red rider and white looked full into each other's faces. And here Morgan felt a shock of surprize, for the keen, weather-seamed old face was—kind. Perhaps it seemed more so because of the harshness of the faces to which he had become accustomed.

Then they had pivoted and were sweeping along with the head of the column. Hunting Dog was talking to Morning Star, leaning close as they rode, in order to

be heard above the thunder of the hoofs behind. A few minutes later Hunting Dog, followed by the scouts, turned again and rode toward the rear of the column. With right hands raised high and faces beaming with exultation the scouts raced toward the remuda, and as they drove past the Indians of the column a suppressed clamor of welcome and applause followed them along. Here and there a hand or a quirt flicked out to strike at one of the returning scouts in an exuberance of welcome.

Morgan was astounded by the composition of the column. He had pictured to himself a band of warriors, encumbered only by the gear of war. In this conception he had been utterly wrong. This was no war party which Morning Star led, but a tribe of families, carrying with them all the few earthly things that they possessed. The tribe numbered perhaps three hundred, all told. But of these scarcely seventy were men who bore arms.

Of the rest, many were women, some young and lithe, more old and dumpy of form. They rode with the accustomed, centaur-like ease of the men. Behind many of them rode young children, their little arms clinging about their mothers' waists. These were little ones of four and five years old. Still littler ones, scarcely more than babies, rode before their mothers on the withers of the ponies, their mothers balancing them in their seats. Here and there a tiny baby was carried on its mother's back on a cradle board or in the slack of a blanket.

Little boys and girls of six or seven were riding ponies like men, many of them sitting their mounts bareback with the ease of children who rode before they ever walked.

The rough count of seventy armed warriors included stripling boys, some of scarcely more than twelve years, slim, beautiful, graceful figures, naked but for moccasins and breech clouts. They were jaunty and confident, thoroughly at ease on their ponies. But the littlest ones were in deadly earnest, as if terribly eager to prove their worthiness to carry weapons with their sires.

Here and there, too, were aged men, their arms shrunken, their faces like great oak leaves, withered and sere; yet they bore themselves proudly, their weapons light in their hands.

Scattered through the column was a scrofulous ragtag and bobtail of white men's clothing, but most of the fighting men wore nothing above the waist. Their smooth shoulders and backs yielded to the movement of their mounts with the grace of cougars.

Throughout the column were many travois, drawn for the most part by horses which little children rode. The long burdened poles were fastened to the ponies like elongated wagon shafts, and dragged upon the ground behind. To them were lashed great bundles, or sometimes baskets in which groups of little children rode. They sprung and bounded with the irregularities of the ground and the heave of the galloping ponies.

A few had bandaged wounds. Occasionally there loomed a great war bonnet of snowy eagle feathers, tipped with black.

The scouts circled the remuda and far in the rear, the last of all, they found a gaunt, high-shouldered warrior who was Little Wolf.

The great war chief of the Cheyennes appeared to be of middle age, tall, soldierly of carriage and toughly lean. His gaunt face was wide of cheekbone and wide of mouth, with eyes pinched narrow by long squinting into the sun. It was drawn into stern lines by an expression so resolutely grim, yet so thoughtfully calm that Morgan was instantly struck with the man's visible strength.

After a swift, unreadable inspection, Little Wolf seemed to notice Morgan no more. Hunting Dog and the war chief consulted for a few minutes without slackening pace, then Little Wolf left the rear of the column in the charge of another man and with Hunting Dog and the Otter whipped up his fast pinto pony and raced for the head of the traveling village.

"WHAT do you want to do?" Blanket asked Morgan, riding alongside.

The Indian had found the travois of his own lodge, and no longer wore shirt nor leggings. Instead he now displayed a war bonnet, a distinguishing decoration, since they were worn by few. Its tall eagle feathers enhanced his fine, light carriage.

"If you want to leave us now," Blanket continued, "maybe Little Wolf will give you a horse of some sort."

"How about my gun?" Morgan asked.

"We can't give you that. It would be like giving you a man's life."

Slide considered hastily. This was plainly an offer from Blanket to intercede for his liberty. But he knew that the chances were ten to one that the horse he got would be one picked up by the Indians along the way. To be captured on it would mark him a horse thief—and probably there would be a necktie party on that score alone, with no questions asked. He sparred for time.

"Why should you let me go now," he asked, "when you were afraid to before?"

"It's fight and run, now," said Blanket. "We're only trying to get through here. Cavalry can't bother us—once it's behind. Even with our families and travois, we can outrun them any day. They don't change horses often enough, and they don't know how to live off the country. What harm can *you* do?"

Slide came to his decision. Here and there in the West there must be men who remained his friends, but which they were and where, he was uncertain. He conceived that his one best bet was to get back to Jake Downey at Hickory Lookout, above the North Platte and from there, freshly horsed and armed, push west over the divide.

He could make it alone, if he needed to, with one worn-out horse. But every day that he could safely stay with the Indians and their constantly freshened remuda would carry him a distance equal to three-days' travel alone with one horse. Also the Cheyennes knew how to gather food without loss of time nor additional risk.

To stay with Morning Star's band was a bold, reckless move. Slide did not realize that at that very time fully thirteen thousand United States troops were on the move to cut off the galloping Cheyenne village. But he did know that there was going to be "—— poppin' aplenty." There had been already, and the worst was ahead without end in sight. With eyes open he made his play.

"I'll stay with you, if you'd just as soon."

"There'll be fighting with the whites—lots of it," Blanket warned him.

"I'm used to that."

"They'll kill you—they're sure to—if they catch you with us."

"They sure aim to," Morgan agreed.

"Well," grinned Blanket, "if that's what you want, that's your lookout. Little Wolf will probably hand you over to me, if I ask him."

Blanket quirted his horse and drifted forward toward the head of the column, and for a long time Slide rode near Strong Neck, who now rode at the tail. When Blanket at last returned he bore his horse close against Morgan's.

"You're turned over to me," he said with a peculiar grin that showed his strong yellow teeth. "Most will leave you alone on account of that. But stay near me. There is danger on every side of you and all the time. If things go badly, or if you make one false move, nothing can save you!"

CHAPTER XV

TALKY STANDS PAT

THREE men—Jake Downey, Talky Peters and Seth Russell—lounged in a small cubicle on the second floor of the Happy Chance Hotel and Bar, waiting with an impatience that was almost, but not quite, concealed. It was not the same room from which Slide Morgan had made his getaway a few months before, for this room faced the street, but in all other

respects it was the same—short, narrow, and furnished with a cheap bed and a crude chair.

From the bar and from the street below the window there rose a steady hum of many voices, representing in its volume the greater part of the population of the Roaring River range. The brilliant heat of midsummer noon beat upon the dry, powdered dust of the street, and with the hum of voices there drifted up slow-rolling puffs of this dust, gradually powdering their clothes and stiffening their eyelashes with its faint weight. The hot air was heavy with the odor of sweating horseflesh and lather-wet leather.

"I ain't wild an' crazy about this," said Seth Russell stolidly.

He was lean and tall, very angular, with shoulders as hard and cornered as broken stone, his sharp-corded wrists and the coarsened, cross-hatched skin of his neck spoke of long activity in all weathers. His long face was twisted and lined into an aspect of hostility from years of scowling into the sun, suggesting a harshness of temperament that was belied by his civil manner. Even his mustache and scant sandy hair seemed burnt and bleached by the tireless sun of the plains.

"Am I?" Jake Downey asked.

"Such a —— fool rumpus I never heard tell of," Seth went on. "Plumb humany, all the way. Just the same, I think we got Cade on the run, Jake. We made him overplay his hand so far he's goin' to look awful silly."

Downey chuckled.

"Betcha the boys are goin' to laugh fit to kill when they hear what this Talky's bein' tried for. This miners' court business is a real laughable proposition in the first place. Worse'n the Vigilante idee—an' that's all miner foolishness too. Gerreat jumpin' Jehoshaphat, Mister Russell! How come yuh stood fer all this miner monkey business comin' up in yore cow country?"

"Well," said Seth Russell. "We sure needed somethin! Abner had the main say, an' that's what he rigged up. There was the Injuns first. The Vigilante rig-up give us somethin' to work with, an' tell who was pullin' their weight an' who was layin' back. Then it helped clean up the two big rustlin' messes pretty good. An' it's put a kibosh on the worst o' the perfessional gun throwers an' such."

"When I think o' how Abner Cade runs things around here I'm astonished," said Jake. "He owns these boards under us. He sold us the stuff we et today an' the liquor we drunk. He runs the Vigilantes, an' the town, an' most o' the range. I've come —— close to thinkin' he runs us."

"He don't run me, Jake," Russell said. Then, after a moment, "Yuh got to make allowances for him. The railroad not comin' through here was a pretty stiff wallop to Ab. He'd be terrible rich today, Jake, if things had worked out like he built for."

Jake Downey started to spit out of the window, but viewed the milling men below and spit on the floor instead.

"They're hazin' 'em all out o' the bar," he reported. "Gosh, look at 'em come! How'd all them get in there?"

"Guess they figger to make 'em all leave their guns outside," said Seth Russell.

"Well," said the old express rider, "what's the sum an' substance of our play?"

"Let them all spiel their spiel. Anybody can talk as wants, in this show, an' when everybody's through, then everybody votes what to do. One man's say is as good as another's, or a —— sight better. It won't last long; the boys'll get hot an' restless, an' shout the long-winded fellers down.

"After every body has talked against Peters that's goin' to, you get up an' lay down the law. Give 'em ——! Everybody knows yuh, by hearsay, anyway, an' we got enough boys of our own to whoop it up when yuh quit. Then all our boys start yellin' for the vote. An' nobody else can talk against a row like that, so we'll vote. Talky will be awarded a medal or somethin', an' prob'ly all the boys, bein' half lit anyway, will laugh fit to die."

"Where do you come in?" Jake demanded. "All this comical stuff jest to give the boys a show?"

"After they clear Talky of whatever they got rigged up against him, why—then I'll speak my piece. An' when I get done this miners' court business is goin' to be a thing of the past. An' the Vigilantes is maybe goin' to mind their own business some!"

"How 'bout me?" Talky Peters put in for the first time. "Do I get to answer 'em back, or do I jest sit an' take it?"

"Answer 'em when yuh feel like it. But make it short."

"He couldn't make it anythin' else," Jake assured him.

There was a long silence while they sat in the heavy heat. Seth Russell sat motionless on the cheap bed, his long limbs idle; but his eyes were alive, and in them showed a quiet, tenuous sort of strength that suggested not granite but steel. If there was a man in the Roaring River country who could match hands with Abner Cade and win, Seth Russell was the one.

Talky shifted restlessly, now and then, his face almost cheerful. If any man had a right to be nervous it was he, for the men of four great cattle outfits had swarmed into Roaring River to decide what next would happen to Talky Peters, and for the first time in his life he held the center of the stage.

"They're pretty near all inside," Jake reported at last. "Guess all is in that's goin' to get in. She's runnin' over some."

"Let's go down."

They got up and clumped out, their spurs tingling at their heels.

A LOW, narrow platform of boxes and planks had been rigged at the rear of the Happy Chance Bar. On this crude platform, a little to one side of the middle, a deal table stood, with two chairs, one behind it and one at the side. In the former sat Abner Cade, massive and wearily inert, yet conveying an impression of that dominant strength that was in truth his. In the other chair sat Marve Conklin, constable by appointment of the Vigilantes, his round, firm-crusted face with its bracketing flat sideburns shone wetly crimson in the heat.

Filling the square barroom roosting upon the long bars and jamming behind them, standing on tables and chairs, sprawling on the edge of the platform before Cade's table, and crowding up on to ends of the platform itself was packed the humming, sweating mob of cowmen. Russell himself, owner of the Box R, who had brought forty men of his own to this gathering, had not realized the extent of the population which the Roaring River range had attained. There were probably less than three hundred men there; but the dense crowding in the usually spacious bar gave the effect of a vast assemblage.

"Gerreat Cripe!" burst out Jake Downey. "Look at the fellers!"

He suddenly broke into chuckles.

"Such a wonderful fuss over nothin' I never see! Never happened in the world before—couldn't happen no place else but Roarin' River! Gorry! I wouldn't a-missed it, if it was my own hangin'!"

"Gosh," said Talky, looking somewhat appalled.

"Ab never expected nothin' like this," exulted Downey in high glee. He had to shout to be heard over the rumble of the voices.

"Yo're —— tootin' he didn't!" Seth Russell answered. "He figured to hold this quiet, in some room upstairs. Now see why I wanted miners' court, 'stead of a jury?"

"Man! Man! Man!"

Beads of sweat were breaking out upon Jake Downey's forehead with the stupendous heat of the packed bar, but he looked as if he were going to dance up and down.

They jammed and elbowed their way from the crowded stairway to the platform, mounted it, and struggled to the front rank. Here Seth Russell and the former express rider halted, pressing back against the wall, but Talky Peters stepped

forward two paces more and stood dazedly before the third chair upon the platform, which had been reserved for him.

"There he is!" yelled somebody.

For a moment the dense mass of cowmen subsided to a minor buzz. Then some Box R man bawled at the top of his lungs.

"Hooray fer Talky!"

Fifty voices took up the yell in the high pitched whoops of cattle hazers. Men who were prejudiced against the Box R in all things were swept into the wild riot of noise by sheer contagion and the old building trembled with an ear-piercing roar.

As the tumult subsided, Abner Cade slowly swung his big face toward Talky Peters; from a poker-face mask his light eyes, to which the sagging lower lids gave an expression of implacable malevolence, looked stolidly at Talky.

Talky met the gaze and as he returned it he slowly grinned with such mocking insolence that a ripple of laughter started, and swelled to a roar. The wild whooping and cheering broke forth anew.

As this second spasm died, a slight flurry occurred in about the middle of the barroom. Questions were shot from mouth to mouth, and some tried to press toward the disturbance, but without avail. In a moment the relaxed form of a hatless cowboy was resurrected from the middle of the milling mass, and held aloft by a dozen hands. A rider who had drunk incautiously but with ambition had been overcome by biliousness and the heat. The effect, however, was as if he had been overcome by the emotion of the minute.

Somebody recognized the collapsed tipster.

"Too much fer Indianny Jones!" he bellowed.

Laughter again rumbled as the slumbering cowboy began to move feet first, passed from hand to hand above the heads of the mob, toward the outer air.

"Hooray fer Indianny!" yelled somebody.

And again the wild cheering broke forth, intermingled with whoops and guffaws of laughter. When this tumult had died away the crowd mopped foreheads, panting and gasping for air, but chuckling yet.

Before Abner Cade lay two guns: One an oily blue forty-five, the other a rusty flintlock. Except for the gun in Marve Conklin's holster, the blue gun was supposed to be the only shootable iron within the bulging walls of the Happy Chance. Cade now rose, picked up the rusty flintlock pistol, and hammered mightily on the table with the butt. The drone of voices began to quiet.

With Indianny Jones out of the way, the cowmen again turned their attention to Talky Peters. Only a few knew Talky Peters personally—even fewer knew what his trial was about.

He was being tried as a result of the almost fanatic insistence of the embittered Abner Cade, he was being tried by miner's court, with the range invited to take part, because of the efforts of Seth Russell. Not a man in the Roaring River territory was unapprised of his urgent invitation —Russell had seen to that. Nor were any absent who could possibly make it to the Happy Chance.

Yet the nature of Talky's crime against the peace of the range was unknown. The cowmen conceived, however, that it must be an outrageous one, unparalleled in the annals of the range. There had never been a mass trial at Roaring River before; they had never seen the like. Hence they reasoned that the cause of the huge demonstration must also be something monstrous and unheard of. For the love of action they endured the airless heat of the barroom, seven times stuffier than a circus tent in August, and presently a hushed expectancy responded to Cade's insistent hammerings.

Seth Russell's face was a blank, only the intensity of his shrewd eyes and the locked stillness of jaws that were usually chewing revealed his internal elation. Cade was in a poor position and Russell knew it.

As for Cade, if he were cursing the moment in which he consented to hold

miners' court, he did not show it. There was the same weary droop in his massive shoulders, the same weight of the ages in his voice as he spoke. At his best Cade was a pillar of strength in his range, at his worst he was still a man who fought with whatever weapons came into his hands, nor asked odds of any.

"Men," said Abner Cade; and paused. The word was not a common form of address but uttered slowly in Cade's heavy voice it brought no mirth.

"Men," he said again. "We've met here about a very serious thing. What this man has done may not seem much. Truth is, it don't matter none. What we're here to see about is a whole —— sight more important than any one thing any one man does. We're goin' to decide today whether we're goin' to have law on this range, or whether men from outside can ride in here killin' who they please an' then ride out o' here untouched."

Cade knew his men. He could not talk long, he knew, he must make every word count. Here in truth he was face to face with a test of his strength, in circumstances not of his own choosing. He knew, now, better than any perhaps, how pitifully weak the case against Talky was. Yet if he lost his point he would be made ridiculous, a laughing stock among the men who had accepted him as leader.

Here was no loaded jury, but a mass of men most of whom gave allegiance to themselves alone. And they were as quick to laugh as to fight or to drink.

Swiftly, with picked words, Cade spoke of the law and what it meant, and he spoke of it in cattle terms, linking it closely to the lives of the men to whom he spoke. He missed few opportunities, in the brief moments he dared take, to play upon local prejudice, pride of independence, sense of fairness, and love of battle. There was hardly a mainspring in the cowboy character that Cade did not in some way try to release in the men before him. And his words were chosen well.

Even so, those farthest away, tired of standing in the heat, and plagued by thirst and the flies, grew restless before he was done.

"Old boy's wound up fer all day," grumbled somebody near the door.

"Dry up," warned a friend. "There's a snap in the old dog yet!"

"Didja say snap, or yap?"

A mumble and snicker of suppressed laughter ran across the neighboring jam, and Cade saw that he must work fast.

"Now a man named Morgan comes in here, in our own range. Some call him Cheyenne Morgan. Whatever else he was, I guess everybody is pretty well sure that Morgan was a half-breed Injun. He—"

A harsh old voice cut into the monologue like the lash of a rope.

"Now you hold on!"

All eyes turned to where a scrawny old arm and fist shot up from the mass against the left-hand bar, one bony finger pointing commandingly at Cade.

"I don't wanna butt in here," the voice went on, "but I know a sight better than that last remark!"

"Throw him out!" yelled somebody.

"He's got a right t' talk if he wants tuh!"

"Who the —— is he?"

"Well, one man's good as 'nother, an' I'll—"

"Chuck him out!"

"Leave him talk!"

The scattering shouts increased to a bedlam. There was no discipline here, only reckless spirit, midday liquor, and a craze for action. Cade hammered the table unheard. Hands reached down from those standing on the bar and hoisted the trouble maker to a precarious perch on the counter's edge, and as the strident voice began to speak again the crowd hushed to hear what it said.

"I knowed Ben Morgan ten years back!" the old man yelled.

The speaker was as bald as a canned tomato, and about as red and wet. The lower third of his short face was concealed by a curtaining gray mustache, through which he bawled. He was scraggly and old, but from beneath his bushy brows an

angry light blazed. None of the Box R men had seen him before.

"Morgan's as full-blooded white as any man here, an a —— sight whiter'n some. He's white an' he's squar, an' any man 'at knows what he's talkin' about will say same as me!"

"That man speaks God's truth," said Jake Downey loudly.

The Box R punchers knew nothing of Slide Morgan, but they were backing their outfit's play.

"You're —— tootin' he does!" yelled one, and a score of voices were lifted in support.

Disorganized by the unexpected sally, the planted punchers of the Flying B rallied slowly.

"Throw him out!" yelled several at last.

But the old man was in the midst of his own outfit, a neutral one. Shouts went up all about him.

"Try an' do it!"

"What's holdin' yuh back?"

The mass began to weave and seethe ominously, but for the moment no blow could be struck in the density of the jam. Abner Cade was hammering the table again and presently the mob quieted.

"I won't say about that," said Cade, "because I don't know. I'm tellin' yuh what's said. It don't make no difference either way."

He passed on quickly.

"You all know my brother was the finest man that ever stood up."

Cade pushed to let this soak in for a moment, and this time there was a dead silence.

"Cheyenne Morgan killed him," said Cade, his voice cold and level.

At this Jake Downey would have spoken, but Seth Russell hissed savagely in his ear, and Jake withheld. But Cade paused a trifle too long for his effect. Again unexpected opposition was interposed. A deep voice boomed in the silence—

"In self-defense!"

The speaker was a black-bearded Box R man as stalwart as a moose.

For a fraction of a moment Cade seemed to gather himself. Then his voice exploded into a roar.

"That's a lie!"

The big, bearded man surged forward, but the press of the crowd held him helpless. A rumbling mutter rolled over the room, then silence again, the silence of suspense.

"Let's hear witnesses," demanded Seth Russell in a cold voice.

"There was no witnesses," said Cade, purpling with wrath.

"Answer me one question," said Seth Russell, pointing an impaling finger at Abner Cade. "Who was the first man got there after the fight?"

"It don't make—" Cade began.

"*Who was it?*"

Before the massed cowmen Cade did not dare evade.

"Happy Bent!" he spat out.

"Where's Happy?"

Several voices sounded, "Here he is!" "Git up here, Happy!"

Ready volunteers hauled the reluctant youngster up on to the edge of a packed bar top, so that he half stood on the bar, and half hung suspended over the crowd.

"We ain't tryin' Morgan or Happy Bent!" Cade roared.

But the crowd was anxious to hear the first-hand story of this killing that had rocked the Roaring River country as no other had. Necks craned to see Happy, and Cade was momentarily forgotten, dynamic force that he was.

"Let's hear it, Happy!"

"Give us the straight of it!"

"Leave Happy talk!"

Seth Russell stepped forward to the edge of the platform, ignoring the furious Cade, and took command.

"What was the first you seen o' this fight, Happy?" he asked, his voice clear above all the others; and the din ceased.

"Well," Happy faltered, "I hea'd a shot an' I rushed out. Lew Cade was lyin' theah, an' somebody was ridin' off on a dahk-cullud hawse. Didn't see who or what hawse."

"What ailed Lew Cade, Happy?"

"He had a knock on the head, like with a gun bar'l."

"Did he look like he'd been fightin'?"

"He looked like somebody tied into *him*, all right."

At this a macabre chuckle ran over the cowmen. Russell's voice cut through it.

"Was his gun out, Happy?"

"Yes suh, it was so. It was jest kind o' fallin' out o' his hand as he lay."

"Did yuh look at it?"

"I did by an' by. He'd fiuhed it oncet. It blowed a hole in the ground right in front of him."

A surprized rumbling hum ran over the massed men, dying away as Cade spoke. The surviving Cade did not thunder now, but his voice was strained and tense.

"How'd you know that was Lew's gun fired? Maybe Cheyenne Morgan murdered Lew, fired, and traded guns!"

It was a desperate expedient, poorly hit upon; but the crowd did not laugh yet.

"Had his 'nitials on."

Abner Cade pressed savagely on—

"How'd you know he didn't pull Lew's gun, fire it, then stick it in his hand?"

The answer had no hesitation in it, here Cade was on Happy Bent's own ground.

"I c'd tell by the way the bullet sunk in the ground."

This was the sort of explanation the cowmen could understand, and there were grunts of approval at the stripling's ready replies.

"You know very well Morgan could have fired that gun, no matter which way the bullet went," Cade thundered. "*How d'yuh know?* The long an' the short of it is you don't know nothin' about *what* happened, do you?"

Abner Cade was striving desperately to beat down Happy Bent by sheer force, but these were not men to be daunted by thunderings. The latest offering of Cade was too much for the crowd to swallow, and it shifted restlessly as it waited for Bent's reply. It came quickly.

"Say!" said the youngster with some heat. "You don't think I know *nothin'*, do yuh?"

It was all they were waiting for. They roared with laughter.

Cade now made the mistake of looking around at Talky Peters, and when Talky grinned in reply the mass rocked with laughter anew. After a few drinks men are made to laugh easily, as easily as they can be made to fight.

As the laughter calmed the bull-like roar of the black-bearded man rose once more.

"Self-defense!" he boomed. "Now yuh've got the straight o' this —— persecution of a Box R man!"

Angry shouts rose from among the Box R punchers, for they were ripe for turmoil. Abner Cade gave over pounding on the table with the butt of the flintlock, and went to the front of the platform, raising both hands in an appeal for silence. Yet there was no peace until Seth Russell also stepped forward and raised his hands. The Box R's old man was not ready for his climactic reduction of Abner Cade.

At Seth Russell's command the Box A men, too, became gradually quiet. When Cade spoke his voice was calm.

"Boys," he said, and he was not oratorical now "we've got off the trail here. We're not tryin' Morgan, but Peters."

"What's *he* done in self-defense?" demanded the black-bearded man, and the crowd laughed.

"It's the old question of law and order," Cade said wearily.

He had been outwitted by Seth Russell, and he was beaten. But he must press on now.

"Are we goin' to decide who can kill here an' go free, or is each killer goin' to decide that for himself? That's the whole question. This man Peters connived in the escape of Morgan. He rode with him when he run away from the results of his act. He fired on the lawful posse that went to bring Morgan back. He shot Jess Carroll, an' smashed his leg. He did everything he could possibly do to prevent that runaway murderer from bein' brought to justice.

"It ain't a question of whether Morgan

should hang or not. It's a question of who should decide if he's to hang. I say you men should decide, you men that live on this range. Peters thinks he can decide that himself an' shoot the men that stand up for your rights. It's law and order standin' against plain common six-gun murder, that's all. Who wins? In any country in the world but here, Peters would get his, fast an' sudden. Here—it's up to you! All I ask is a jail sentence for this man!"

Cade had driven every word home, and there was a pause as he sat down behind his table. The planted men of Cade's own outfit had lost track of their instructions, but in a moment one of them decided that this was the time to call for the vote.

"Question!" he shouted.

Others of his fellows took up the cry. "Question! Question!"

"Well," boomed a deep voice from a corner, "what *is* your question?"

Laughter again.

Then Seth Russell nudged Jake Downey hard, and Jake jumped forward as if a spring had been released. His strong voice battered down the random shouters, and there was quiet. Jake Downey pointed to Talky Peters, and his square red face was furious as he yelled.

"This man helped out a friend! He's guilty o' stickin' by his pal! He went through —— an' high water to do it. If there's a waddie here so —— low an' stinkin' mean that he wouldn't do the same, pervidin' he had the guts, let him holler to send Talky Peters to jail. I say give him a vote of thanks!"

A burst of cheering and whooping that started in the Box R crowd rose to a brief tumult. But heat and the denatured air, combined with throat-rasping thirst, had taken some of the noise out of the crowd, and the unholy racket was short lived. As it died the Box R section took up the cry for an end to the farce.

"Vote! Vote! Vote!"

Cade rose and lifted a hand for silence, and got it. He temporized no more.

"All those in favor of a jail sentence for Peters, answer 'Aye!' "

A lusty, solid shout went up from the Flying B section.

"Pin a medal on him!" yelled some one, and laughter rumbled.

"Buy him a bar'l o' gin!"

"Pass the hat!"

"All those against the jail sentence, answer 'No.' "

Jake Downey sprang forward yelling, as if to yank the answer out of them with his upthrust fists.

"NO!" roared the mob. "NO, NO!"

Abner Cade leaned forward over the table, his face gone oyster white with wrath. Savagely he raised his arms for silence.

"Si' down!" yelled some one.

But Seth Russell was on the edge of the platform, his arms raised, and in the popular approval he drew silence where Cade could not. The crowd became still.

"Fellas," said Russell; and his eyes gleamed, for this was the moment he had planned for.

But Cade's voice bludgeoned through, filling the barroom until the dense atmosphere quivered.

"I'll say one more thing," he roared, his great voice edged with rage. He flung out an arm to point at Talky Peters.

"You have just now set free one of the sneakin'est cowardly criminals that ever dirtied the Platte!"

There was a gasping silence. Talky lurched forward half a step, then checked, his face white. Confronting him, steady as rock, was Cade's blue forty-five.

"You —— cheap coyote!" cried Talky, his voice breaking with rage.

The crowd was surging in about them, and the buzzing of voices was once more rising to a din. Jake Downey remembered afterward that from the corner of his eye he had seen a snaggle-toothed man with a tobacco-stained mustache thrust into the circle behind Talky, then swiftly drop to hands and knees.

Now a six-gun, long and heavy, flashed up in Talky's hand, apparently from no where.

"For God's sake, Talky!" yelled Jake, yet knowing it was too late.

Abner Cade's face showed blank astonishment, too swift and real to be feigned. The blued gun wavered and dropped an inch as if Cade was incapacitated by the surprize. In that instant the gun in Talky's hand clicked twice on empty cylinders.

A mad smother of men were tumbling off the platform, sprawling, scrambling frantically to get below danger level. Then Cade's gun crashed once.

Talky Peters was jolted backward as if hit with a sledge. For a moment he kept his feet, and the gun in his hand clicked once more. Then his left hand clutched his chest and he pitched forward on to his face.

CHAPTER XVI

LODGES OF THE COALS

THE prairie lay deep under the night, and once more the fighting Cheyennes of Morning Star were going into bivouac. But now many a day's hard ride had been pounded away since Slide Morgan's first night with the swift-marching village, and the atmosphere had changed.

There was little talking now, and no jokes nor laughter; only a terrible weight of weariness and an undercurrent of slow, plodding movement of a people for whom there could be little rest, with an endless, unmarked trail stretching beyond. The Solomon River was far behind. There had been a brush with plainsmen there, cowboys and buffalo hunters, costing three wounded. On Frenchman Creek, close by Wauneta, the Cheyennes had fought a hard, bitter skirmish with troops; a warrior named Whooping Crane had been killed, and another, badly wounded, was unaccounted for.

Now the broad yellow waters of the South Platte were only a few miles ahead. Westward, on the river, lay a town which Morgan judged to be Ogallala; at dusk Hunting Dog had made it out by its smoke, though the cowboy could see nothing. Most had believed that the Platte would be crossed before the stop; but evidently the chiefs had decided otherwise. The camp was therefore made on a tiny creek, just out of sight of the light timber fringing the river itself.

No Dog Soldiers walked among the people enforcing quiet; in all the camp hardly a voice was raised. Even the little children were silent, weary to utter exhaustion, sleeping almost where they had dismounted. At the stream the horses drank deep until driven from the dangerously satisfying water by the braves. Then they stood close-huddled not far off, heads low, backs humped, too tired to graze. Range horses had been scarce in their path for the past week.

In the dimness of the starlight Morgan observed these things as he walked, weary but restless, through the trailing camp. Now that the most punishing part of the journey so far had been reached he was standing the pace better than he would have believed possible. There were no horsemen like the Cheyennes, yet, often riding without saddles, they had never been prone to long trotting. They had trotted steadily in a hard, extended gait for the great part of four days and nights; now with many weary horses the gallop no longer could be sustained.

The trot had always been the habitual gait of the cowboy and the steady racking pound took less effect upon him, perhaps, than upon the Indian riders. His improvised grass-pad saddle formed an ill-fitting seat, but at least it could be kept soft, and the strap stirrups were adjusted to his habit. Even in the half-dazed weariness resulting from the long hammering he could find clarity of judgment enough to feel pity for the children, the women and the old men who endured all stoically, because they must.

He wandered on toward the crest of a rise, seeking nothing, unless it were to be for a little while alone. As he looked back toward the camp he could hardly make it out at all. Although he was but a few rods away the tiny coals of the cooking fires were so well concealed by careful choosing of the ground that

hardly a seeping radiance was visible in the night. Here and there, against a faint glow, dark figures moved—that was all.

Then, fifty paces ahead of him and outlined against the stars, a black form loomed darker than the star-set sky. It might have been the ragged ruin of a tree, lifting withered, broken branches to the sky, but as Morgan's eye checked upon it he saw it slowly move.

An old man was standing on the crest of the rise, a man so old that a ragged blanket was tied over his shoulders in spite of the warmth of the September night. He wore no feathers and his scanty ungreased hair hung in stiff tangled strands. His arms were extended to the north, the hands outstretched and pleading. For a long time he held the pose, and so clearly could Morgan see him against the stars that he could discern the tremble of the claw-like old hands.

After a few moments the old man turned to the west and, after a little while more, to the south. Then with a gesture fraught with supplication he dropped his head forward upon his chest and extended his begging hands toward the ground.

Lastly the old man raised his face and arms to the sky. For a long moment he stood thus before Morgan heard him speak. Then the cracked old voice, very low and quiet but desperately pleading, spoke a single phrase twice.

"*Heamawihio! Heammawihio!*" The words came out with a shuddering wrench, almost a sob. "Wise One! Wise One Above!"

Slide recognized the voice. The old man was Red Thunder, the medicine-man of wars and hunting. And now Morgan realized why the aged Indian had walked away from the camp, bearing with him his weariness, to be alone. Ahead Red Thunder saw the inevitable end of the long march. His ceremonies, his sweet-smoked medicine-fires, were to fail as were the sacred Arrows, the nine Indomitable Ones that were entrusted with the fortunes of the tribe. And his wordless medicine-songs, the dream-gifts of his six gods, were lost upon the wind.

In the presence of the tribe Red Thunder would not have dared to do what he did now. To supplicate with his naked heart while his vaunted drums and rattles lay silent would have been to admit his defeat. Yet this was all that remained to him now. Baffled, beaten, pitifully at a loss to understand why the spirits had turned their faces from him, the old man had come on to the prairie alone and old, stripped of his ceremonies, to offer the prayer for which he no longer had any words.

Suddenly the old man tottered, overcome by fatigue and his great emotional effort his knees buckled and he crumpled sidewise to the ground, supporting himself with his hands.

Morgan turned and went away.

A PINTO horse magically materialized before him. He had almost walked into it before descrying it and once more he swiftly wondered at the low visibility of the noisy pinto blazes. The horse was watching him, ears cocked. Then it snorted, and swiftly lowered its head to tear hungrily at the buffalo grass. Here Slide had stumbled upon what was now a rare thing in the Cheyenne remuda—a fresh horse.

He now recognized it as the horse that Little Wolf had ridden that day. He had noticed its powerful, free stride, the bright carriage of its head, and the half-tamed, glass-like glare of its pale eyes. It was deep of shoulder, short coupled—everything; the pick of a hundred head of horse, lifted at random on the plain in the last ten days.

With a swift exultation Morgan realized his opportunity. The South Platte was just ahead, and beyond it, not incomprehensibly far at this point, the North Platte, the river for which he had waited. Beyond that and to the west lay Hickory Lookout, the one place on all the plains where he could rely upon finding loyalty and every aid that a man could give.

Now surely was the time to leave the

jaded, harassed Indians, who could not now have so much farther to go to the battle that they could not win. An easy flight into the starlight on the best horse the Cheyennes had been able to lift and he would be clear. The fingers of his right hand still extended stiffly crooked, useless. He could not shoot or help himself in any way if a gun were raised against him. Yet the agitation started by Abner Cade was probably quieter now and he had learned much about concealment from the Cheyennes. A knifed beef here and there would supply his food.

Yet he hesitated. There was one thing he had been meaning to do and he was reluctant to leave these people of another race, who had helped him, with it undone.

Morgan strode back to the stretch by the winding creek where lay the scattered cooking fires of the Cheyennes, shelterless lodges of the coals. In and out among them he walked until he found the one he sought.

A slender woman, hardly more than a girl, was broiling beef over sputtering coals. Three withered, aged women and a toothless old man sat in a circle about the fire, waiting for the food which she prepared. They sat apathetic, their rheumy eyes fixed on the ground, not on the fire, but a little apart. Morgan wondered that the life had not been battered out of these aged forms long ago, yet somehow they hung on.

Blanket, still head-dressed and naked to the waist, stood beside the little fire, watching the girl, who was his sister; his eyes were deep with some nameless emotion, but his face was a mask. He could not speak to his sister, for according to Cheyenne tradition this would have been a disgrace. But he spoke to a tiny, almost naked little boy who sat near the coals, and thus conveyed his thoughts.

"Little Frog," said Blanket, "Little pot-bellied Frog, say to your mother that one scout has come in where three went out."

The baby turned serious wide eyes to its mother.

"One came in, three went out," he lisped.

This satisfied the Cheyenne etiquette: it would have done as well has Little Frog been a baby in arms, with no words in him.

"But the others were not seen to be killed, and may come in yet," Blanket went on.

"Ask your uncle what the word is," said Antelope Woman bending over the meat.

"Tell her that the way is closed to the northeast also," said Blanket. "But in the sand-hills beyond the second river there will be rest. Say, Little Frog, that I am going out tomorrow. If I am a long time away, I will try to make medicine so that the little pot-bellied Frog will not get ridden all to pieces."

The child lost the thread of this and sat gazing at Blanket with wide, sober, dark eyes. For a moment Antelope Woman stood up and she and Blanket looked at each other. Between the two there existed a strong, deep affection which the formal estrangement between grown sisters and brothers had enhanced, rather than diminished. Antelope Woman realized that the point had been reached where the scouts must run close risk of death, for there seemed to be soldiers everywhere ahead, but her face showed no anxiety or grief. Those things she had put behind her when her brave had died of fever in the south.

In a moment Blanket turned and strode off into the fire-spotted dark.

Slide Morgan went and squatted by Little Frog. The baby looked so pitifully peaked and tired that Morgan's heart went out to him, as it had done more than once in the long ride.

"Why don't you lie down, Little Frog?"

The child curled upon the ground, as obediently as if an old chief had uttered a command.

Gently Morgan took the moccasin from one diminutive foot. It was worn to scarcely more than a skeleton, this baby's far-traveled footgear; the sole was almost

gone and only a few broken threads of the stitching remained.

Slide's knife snicked through the remaining threads and he pressed the warped leather as flat as he could. From his belt he took a slender roll of leather, its outer surface covered with goat hair. By some scheming Morgan had been able to pare this much leather from the improvised saddle he had made of his chaps.

Slowly, holding the leather down with his foot since his right hand was worthless, he haggled out new moccasin pieces for Little Frog.

When he had finished he looked up to find Antelope Woman regarding him curiously.

"I have no thread," he said, the deficiency dawning upon him for the first time.

"I will finish them," said the young woman softly. She took the leather pieces from him.

Her voice made Morgan look at her with curiosity; he suspected from her tone that had she been of his own race there would have been tears in her eyes, though for what cause he could not imagine. But he saw that there were not; that though her eyes showed a queer light, her face was the same thin, strong mask that it had been before. Slide got up wearily, and started in search of the fires of the Dog Soldiers and the scouts, where aged crones cooked for the warriors whose women were dead.

"Wait!" the girl called after him. "Here's meat."

She gave him a tremendous chunk of beef, and he thanked her. It was nearly raw, but it was hot to his lips, and he tore at it ravenously as he walked toward the place where he had left his saddlebags and makeshift rig.

A drum suddenly began to rumble in a dull, muffled beat, and instantly warriors rose up from the fires all about him. The low, almost whispering throb of the drum died as quickly as it had begun, and Slide realized that Morning Star had called his men to council. And now he saw that his departure must be delayed for a little more.

He had done the trivial thing that he wished to do, when he had cut out the moccasins for Little Frog. It had been a foolish thing for him to risk his chances over—he would not have had his cowboy companions learn of it for five hundred dollars. But he had wanted to do it. He had noticed the Frog many times, usually riding behind his mother, but sometimes alone on one of the quiet travois horses. He was the littlest of the children who were deemed fit to ride alone.

Often during the past few days, when the weight that each horse carried meant much, Slide had noticed Little Frog riding alone, bumping hard on the horse's pumping withers, and clinging to the mane. Yet he never forgot to clutch the halter rope; and at dismounting the child dragged his precious horse away from the too seductive water like a man.

In his small way the child, too, was doing all he could to help the braves fight through the inexhaustible lines of United States troops which stood between them and the homeland which they must regain if they were to live. Reluctantly, perhaps; unavoidably, probably; but nevertheless, the United States uniform was riding forth to confirm the destruction of women and children, just as surely as they were raising their rifles against Dull Knife's braves.

By an unlucky chance Morgan's saddle had been dropped near the place where Morning Star chose to hold council. A lean-ribbed Cheyenne was already sitting cross-legged upon it when Slide arrived. He dared not ask for it, lest he draw the ready suspicion of the braves; nor, in his weary and battered condition was he desirous of undertaking the trip bareback, without even his rope. He decided to wait until the council was over and the Cheyennes slept.

One of the tiny fires was allowed to burn a bit more brightly, since it would be masked by encircling bodies; the rest began to wink out one by one, until only the council fire of Morning Star remained.

The old chief now sat down to the south of the fire, and Little Wolf took a seat immediately upon his left. For a time a group of three scouts, gaunt and travel weary in spite of the leathery toughness of their bodies, squatted close about Little Wolf, conferring with him. Then, as the chiefs came up to take their places, the scouts rose stiffly and retired into the background.

When the other leaders had seated themselves in a circle about the fire, the warriors, as well as a great many of the women, packed closely about the circle, squatting or sitting on the ground. At a sign from Morning Star, Red Thunder placed a buffalo skull before the old chief, the skull facing the fire, and over it shook certain rattles. Then he dropped several powders and a handful of dry sweet-grass into the fire, which presently emitted a pleasant, thin-smoked fragrance, between that of pine needles and that of mellowed hay.

At last, when all these things had been done properly, Morning Star rose slowly, and stood looking about the circle. Morgan noticed again the sadness and kindness of the wrinkled old face.

Among the Cheyennes each chief was elected to serve ten years, and then was perhaps elected for ten years more. Sometimes, after years of service and constant thought for the welfare of his people, the face of a good chief became benevolent and kindly, though perhaps saddened by the infinite folly that he had seen. Such a chief was Dull Knife, who to his own people was Morning Star.

The scattering murmurs of voices here and there about the circle became silent, and at last Morning Star spoke. And now all the gabbling excitability seemed to have gone out of the tribe, as if they had all grown as old as this old man who was talking to them in slow, measured speech.

"My people," he said, "the time has come when we must decide what we are going to do. Little Wolf and I are as one man who sees two ways. Both of us want one thing above all else: To take you to freedom in our northern hills, where we may live happily and become strong once more. Great difficulties are in our way. Sometimes it seems that there is no way to succeed. But we will find a way, because we must.

"We have come a long way. With us are many old people, your old fathers, and your mothers. And there are little children, who are not used to long riding. But they must live to carry on the tribe when we are gone, else there will soon be no more Cheyennes.

"So far we have left none behind because they could ride no more, but in the last few days we have lifted many on to their horses who could hardly stand of their own strength. The strongest warriors are gaunt with weariness. Pity the old and the little and the sick! But I don't wish to speak of pity; I'm talking about what we are able to do.

"Our horses are leg-weary and exhausted. In a little while those we have now won't be able to trot any more. The horse doctors will tell you that many of the ponies grazing here tonight can not go on. Soon we will leave not only horses but people behind.

"But we are in our own country now. It is cooler here, there is no fever in the air. The black horses, and the gray horses, and the others are a long way behind. When we have crossed this river we will soon smell clean water again, water from our hills. The country of pines is not far away. Yet, if we keep running, like animals with the madness upon them, only a few, the young and strong, will ever see the pines in the hills again.

"This is our country. Our gods see us here. Our medicine is very strong. Let us move slowly now, and rest. Let us wrap our guns in our blankets, and fight no more. Then no one will bother us. We will go slowly, keeping out of sight. There will be plenty of food, for there is game up here. Our horses will grow strong, so that when we need to run we can.

"That way we can reach the hills, and all of us will be there. This is our

country. Nothing bad ever happened to us here. Nothing bad will happen now. Tomorrow let us rest here. Then move on slowly, as villages used to move when they went to a good place. Let no one fear."

As Morning Star sat down Little Wolf rose. He was much younger than Morning Star, younger indeed than some of the chiefs over whom he took precedence. Yet he was regarded with respect, for this man was the greatest war leader the Cheyennes had ever known. Where other fighting chiefs were often only single fighters of great courage, Little Wolf was an organizer and a strategist.

Some of the braves leaned forward as Little Wolf began to speak, for there was not one present who did not know what was at hand. The inevitable disagreement of the chiefs had come at last.

"It is all true," said Little Wolf, speaking quickly. "What Morning Star tells you of our plight, I tell you too. But there are other things to be told.

"Ahead of us is the river. Along it runs the path of the iron horse. Along this path there are more soldiers than you have ever seen before!"

He paused, and the dead, unwhispering silence itself told the force of what he had said.

"We'll get through these soldiers, and lose them in the sand hills, but I tell you that it will be the hardest thing we have done yet, when we do that.

"Now let me tell you something more. I have told it to you before, but you never believe me. You must believe me now.

"Every white soldier in the country, from the Big Dry in the north to the Canadian far in the south, knows what every other soldier is doing. When we fought the Sioux we used to fight one tribe or village, and the other Sioux knew nothing about it for a long time. When we fight white soldiers, they all know it right away. And they help each other, because one man is chief of them all. That is why Indians can never beat the soldiers.

"You think because we are away from the soldiers that we fought in the south we are all right. But when the soldiers in the south are at war, the soldiers everywhere are on the war-path too. You know there are soldiers at Fort Robinson on the Niobrara, because you saw them. I tell you they will be looking for us when we get there, and trying to hem us in, and there will be ten there for every one you saw.

"Now the soldiers do not know where we are. But I tell you, by this time they know where we were yesterday. Tomorrow they will know where we are today, and from every place soldiers will be coming here.

"You know I'm not afraid of fighting. But if we fight much more we will all be killed. The soldiers have endless bullets, we have but few. We must try to get through here as fast as we can. I think that when we get to the Big Horn mountains we will be safe. We have come half way.

"I love you all. I wish to leave none behind. But to stay here is to fight soon, and keep on fighting until we are all dead. Let's move as fast as we can with the horses we have, and try to get more. Let those who can no longer ride be put in travois. I can show you the way through yet. But I can't if there is ever any talk of resting when we can still ride one mile more!"

He sat down, and an old chief, little junior to Morning Star in years of service, rose slowly in the inner circle, and spoke gravely, choosing his words. Later other chiefs spoke, one after another, and many warriors, adding the weight of their opinions to one side or the other, and thus the council lasted for a long time.

Among the old, and among those whose families could travel but little more, Morning Star had many supporters. But the mass of opinion was swinging in favor of Little Wolf's plan, punishing though it might be. As warrior after warrior added his counsel to that of the younger war chief, Morning Star gave no sign. Yet Morgan could sense with what a terrible weight the passing of his people's faith

was bearing down upon the soul of the old chief.

At last, when all appeared to have spoken that cared to, Morning Star rose once more.

"We have sat in many councils together," he said slowly, "and always we have agreed upon some plan. Well, we will agree now. Perhaps it is true that there is no longer any safety in this part of the world. Perhaps all that can must push on.

"But there are many who are not fit to travel any more. It is not in my heart to leave them behind. I will stay here with them."

It was said so simply, so undramatically, that it did not register as a refusal on the part of the old chief to accompany his tribe where they wished to go. It lay before them merely as an offered plan.

"Let us cross this river together," said Morning Star. "Then let Little Wolf take all who are strong, and the best of the horses, and go on in the way he thinks best. I will keep the rest with me, the weary, the sick, the little children, and I'll hide them the best I can. Maybe, after a while, we will be together again. I will come as I can, and in the northern hills I will find you and we'll live as we used to live."

At this several spoke vehemently, pleadingly, against the splitting of the village, but presently, after more talking, the division was confirmed.

There was stark tragedy in the faces of some when this decision had been reached, for the clannish suspicion that divided them from every one else, even from other villages of their own tribe, had also served to bring these people close together. The father of Strong Neck, withered and toothless, suddenly broke into tears and drew his blanket across his face, for it was in his mind that he never would see his son again, and he was old.

The apportionment of the people between Little Wolf and Morning Star was effected only after long wrangling in which the chiefs themselves took practically no part. When it was finished, some of the family groups remained together, but most were divided.

Morning Star's party for the most part presented the sorriest appearance imaginable. But with it were a few of the best, including Blanket, Standing Alone, the Otter, and, oddly enough, Hunting Dog himself. Of the scouts with whom Morgan had ridden only Strong Neck, Laughing Coyote and Feather remained with Little Wolf.

When the council at last broke up, Morgan would have recovered his makeshift saddle and departed, but the lean brave who had sat upon it now slept, curled up where he had sat; and Slide did not dare disturb him. So he, too, found himself a place to sleep and stretched himself upon the ground.

The last sound that came to his ears was the dry whispering tremolo of a medicine-rattle on the far edge of the encampment, where Red Thunder, sleepless, worked over war medicines by the light of the stars. Then he slept.

CHAPTER XVII

RED OR WHITE

THEY had crossed the river and the close-forked Plattes lay behind. There had been sharp skirmishing at Ogallala, but they had won free without loss. Then, just beyond the north Platte, hardly out of view of their pursuers, the column had half dissolved. Morning Star's party had dropped behind, spreading fanwise as it fell away, scattering like tired leaves before the wind, and the compact band under Little Wolf had pressed steadily on.

The strength of Morning Star's village, embodied in the party under Little Wolf, slowly pulled away from the others, until they were lost in the haze of dust from their own ponies' feet. The old swinging gallop was a memory now; where here and there a horse had once trotted a little way the condition was now reversed, and here and there a tired horse sometimes broke into a lope to keep up with the hard,

prevailing trot. The faces of the old people who had elected to stay with the war chief were drawn and twisted with the strain of perpetual pounding.

There was no longer any remuda. Many of the people led extra horses and here and there a travel-fogged cayuse stumbled after the others, worn out but herd-bound to the last. These were the only mounts in reserve. And in Morning Star's band there was hardly a pony who could sustain a steady trot.

Slide Morgan followed Little Wolf, almost unnoticed. Among the few who had remembered him at all the assumption had been that he would stay with Blanket, to whom, in a sense, he had belonged. But now Hickory Lookout could not be far away. Little Wolf, still pursuing his course of traveling where he would be least expected, was swinging to the west northwest, paralleling Red Creek and narrowly skirting the partly populated range that lay along that little trickle of water. Thus Little Wolf's course was Morgan's and, riding with the Cheyennes, Slide would in a matter of hours be near Jake Downey once more.

Laboring between his knees was an emaciated pinto horse, once the favorite of Little Wolf himself. A brand for which Morgan had once ridden showed on a shoulder that had been a seal-brown, but was now overlaid by sweat-bound dust. Many a long weary mile lay between that horse and the place where the Cheyennes had picked him up. His head swung low and as his heavy hoofs trotted on he lurched in his trot, more like a tired pacer than like himself.

Under the urge of Slide's moccasined heels the pinto horse strove hard, trying gamely to keep up with the hard-striding mounts of Little Wolf's Cheyennes. The horse, like the man, was reluctant to fall behind the rest. Sometimes his weary head lifted to gaze after the other horses that were slowly, steadily pulling away. Once a half-strangled whinny came from him like a pleading appeal to those of his kind that were leaving him behind. He could not understand why they could pull away from him who had always been in the front before.

Yet slowly the Cheyennes did pull away, a trailing, dust-marked column on the plain. Farther and farther they receded as the hours passed, the gap ever widening between the stragglers and the stumbling pinto horse. Then presently there were times when the hard-riding band could not be seen, as they dropped behind a low ridge. An hour later they were reduced to a dark dot, clouded with a half-seen mist of dust, appearing now and then on a ridge of the horizon. And at last they were seen no more.

Morgan was alone. The long ride with the fugitive people was over. Morning Star's broken band was far behind, scattered, hidden, by now probably nothing more than a far-strewn scattering of shattered remnants. Here and there a family of them might be captured—perhaps none would be able to win through to their hills. But the soldiers could not now fight nor surround them any more than they could wage battle with the coyotes, the high-chattering, tragic little clowns of the prairies.

Little Wolf, with all the strength that was left to the Cheyennes, continued the hopelessly long ride for freedom. He was gone now, over the horizon's rim, the steady trotting of his tired horses covering the miles slowly now, yet putting them one by one behind. With the passing of the Cheyennes a sense of the strangeness of this weird dream that he had been living came upon Morgan, pressing in upon him with its full force now that the Indians were gone.

He looked at his ragged clothing, the worn moccasins that he had been given by Nugget Sam. The peculiar makeshift contraption that he was using for a saddle suddenly felt unaccustomed to him, as it had felt when first he had ridden it. The tie of habit snapped and nothing any longer bound him to the people of another race who had left him behind. He was free again, to ride where he wanted to ride, and the horsemen of Abner Cade must be far away. More swiftly than he

had adapted himself to the life of the traveling village, Morgan found that he had become himself again—a white man, alone on the plain with strange memories like a dream behind him and a cautious struggle ahead. Yet something remained within him, the legacy of the Indians to the man whom they had happened to save —nor was it ever quite rooted out.

Presently he came to a tiny trickling stream, a feeder probably to Red Creek itself. For a long way the moist sands of its narrow bed were thickly pocked with tracks of ponies, where Little Wolf's band had paused to drink, then pushed on. Here and there were dozens of shallow holes the size of a man's hat, where the Cheyennes, swiftly exhausting the tiny dribble of water, had scooped sand basins to gather a few drops of wetness for their mounts. But now the scanty water had flowed in to fill them all, and even the roiled silt had settled again.

Morgan let the pinto pony drink, though less than the animal desired. And he wished that he could stop and rest in a little copse of willows that he found, but because there might be cavalry or cowboys riding hard after the marauding Cheyennes, he dared not stop. Instead he went on slowly, scanning the horizon, and following the little stream. This took him at an angle from the course of Little Wolf, farther and farther from the path of whatever pursuit there might be. Yet he knew that beyond every ridge there might lie danger greater than any he had yet seen.

At high noon he reached Red Creek and, unsaddling the pinto, he let the horse stand alone while he found a hiding place in which to rest. Then as he laid down beneath low hanging branches among a company of tall reeds, distant sounds came to him, telling a story that he could only half make out.

Faint in the far distance as the tick of a watch he heard the report of a gun, then another, and another; then a rattling volley, like wind in dry grasses, coming in a small whisper over the plain. What fortunes shifted and flared to the north where the rifles were cracking he could not know. But he knew surely that Little Wolf was engaged.

For a long half hour, a half hour that seemed like three, the rifles spoke and answered, far away. Slide tried to read the story from the bursts and pauses in the fire, but he could not. Toward the last the shots sounded farther and farther off, until they were mere suggestions of echoes, and at last he could hear nothing more.

SO CLOSELY hidden were the Cheyennes that Morgan almost walked among them before he realized that they were there.

It had been perhaps three o'clock in the afternoon when Morgan had left his resting place by Red Creek, forded the shallow, lazy water, and moved west by north on the tired pinto horse. He did not immediately recognize the country that he was in, though he knew that he could not be far from familiar landmarks. Later he learned that he was much farther north than he had supposed. He had never before approached Red Creek from the east and had taken the head of the little Red Creek tributary, near Hickory Lookout, as the head of the creek itself. Now that he was far up the main stream of the Creek he found nothing that he knew.

Little Wolf, he believed, must be far away, if indeed he had not been overcome in the fighting that Morgan had heard. Yet Slide had traveled scarcely an hour when he came upon the hidden Indians. He was riding at a plodding walk up a slow rise when a bullet whistled past his head, followed instantly by the crashing report of a carbine. The tired pinto horse snorted and stood trembling on wide-braced legs.

Instantly Morgan dismounted and half crouched behind his pony, as he had learned to do while with Hunting Dog's scouts. The shot had come from far to one side, so Morgan proceeded in the way that he was going, hurrying the horse along at his side by means of his left

hand upon the hackamore. Far to his right, as he peered under the horse's neck, he could now make out a straggling gully from which rose the faintest suggestion of a breath of dust.

For the moment he could not understand what sort of difficulty he had walked into. Here were soldiers, perhaps, hostile rifles certainly. Slide sought to gain the crest of the rise.

There was a sickening *chunk* close beside him, almost at the same instant as the second report of a rifle. The lean pinto started violently, then pitched forward on his knees, his dusty nose jamming into the sod. For a moment, dazed, Morgan stood upright beside his fallen horse.

Up from the grass at the crest of the rise sprang a bloody bronze figure, wearing only breech clout and moccasins. Apparently a bullet had struck through the flesh at the side of the man's mouth in a grazing wound, for the left side of his face was a bloody pulp, through which the teeth gleamed in an unnatural leer. Only the Indian's stiff limp as he ran enabled Morgan to recognize Laughing Coyote.

The worn, sliver-like butcher knife was in Laughing Coyote's hand, and Slide realized in a swift flash that the man who had been his friend was charging down the grassy hill to kill him. For a moment the cowboy hesitated, and in the next instant the Coyote was on him.

Morgan's left hand snatched desperately, and managed to grip the wrist of the Cheyenne's knife hand. Fingers clawed into his throat, the nails breaking the skin. Slide jammed his right elbow into that hideous torn face, then struck upward with one knee. The Indian doubled up and collapsed.

A bullet hummed past him as he turned to run. Over the rise came a mad galloping horse. Feather, with his face contorted as Slide had never seen it, leaned over the horse's neck, one hand quirting savagely, the other bearing a seven-foot, sharp-pointed lance.

Close-pressed and harried, boxed in and badly horsed, the Cheyennes had gone battle mad. Perhaps Little Wolf was roaring to his braves, forbidding them to waste lead upon this horseless, weaponless man. But the long struggle for freedom, bitterly contested all the way, had now brought them to the most hopeless predicament they had yet known.

Riding hard and steadily, Little Wolf's scouts had found the way cut off to the north. Even as they turned there had been an attack upon their flank by a strong party of horsemen whom the scouts had for once failed to discover. Few Cheyennes, but many horses were down. By a savage attack, followed by a twisting flight, Little Wolf had wrenched his band free, doubled back, and hid.

But now the war panic was upon the Cheyennes. Hurt, harried, fighting for their very lives, they no longer distinguished between friend and foe. It was Cheyennes against all—and Morgan was white.

In the next few moments two factors controlled Slide Morgan. One was panic, the sure knowledge that he was without arms, afoot, and trapped among war-savage reds who had forgotten everything but the craze to kill. The other was a hard coldness, giving him an infinite swiftness of plan, and guiding his almost superhuman efforts without restraining them.

As Feather thundered upon him Morgan stepped close, struck aside the lance so narrowly that it scratched his flesh as it missed; then in the fraction of an instant in which the thing was possible he seized the Indian's belt and vaulted on to the horse behind him. For a moment he struggled to regain his balance, while the Indian writhed and fought to strike him off. Then Slide smashed his left fist into the Indian's face, and Feather went down.

WHEN the gray horse he had taken from Feather had borne him a long way to the westward, Slide dragged the cayuse down to a walk, and tried to pull himself together. The wild fighting

wrath had passed. It had been followed by a bitterness even greater than that he had heretofore fostered. For up to now he had been one outcast among many, a single fugitive among a people against whom the world at large was pitted. Now even his companions in desolation had turned upon him. For the moment he had forgotten Jake Downey and Talky Peters, who were his friends, and everywhere he looked it seemed that nothing awaited him but hopeless odds.

Now even this had passed, leaving a dull lethargy, an infinite weariness in which there was no ray of light.

It seemed that for hours he plodded on and on, the tired gray beneath him moving with the same aimless persistence as himself. He almost slept on the back of the saddleless horse, but the dull weight upon him denied him even this. The sun sank slowly to the edge of the earth, its light becoming cool, and mellowly clear. It caressed the still gray grass with a light suggestion of gold powder, and across the airy western cloud puffs it flung a vast blaze of colors, burnt orange, the brilliant purple of irises, and lemon gold.

Through the stillness of the sunset a single crystal-clear voice sang, a meadow lark singing in a time outside of her habit; the sweet silvery song sounded its three notes over and over, as if a spirit that was all beauty was hidden somewhere in the rough reaches of the prairie.

But Slide Morgan, with his eyes resting on the pony's crest, neither saw the sunset nor heard the song. He and the horse moved as one, two plodding things without thought, without desire and without hope.

The sunset faded into a dimming afterglow, the twilight thickened, and the gold-touched grass became silvery, then dull and lifeless again. Slide Morgan could smell smoke, and realized without caring that he was nearing some place where men were, or had been.

Then as they topped a brush-clothed knoll he raised his eyes, and came to himself as if from a deep sleep. Beyond the knoll he could see the tops of cottonwoods, and through these the waters of a reedy-margined lake. He swiftly knew what place he had stumbled upon, and instinctively drew up his horse.

The cottonwoods whose tops he saw were ones under which he had often dismounted—the water beyond was Moccasin Lake. If he rode a few yards more his eyes would rest upon the little cabins, the horse shelter, and the frugally husbanded mound of weathered hay, in the edge of which plump hens liked to chuckle and scratch. A pale mist of wood smoke floated and hung in the boughs of the cottonwoods. That would be from the cooking fire over which Nancy Chase would be preparing such food as he had not tasted since John Chase handed him his walking papers.

It came to him that he should turn his horse and move on without risk of being seen. But a strong desire was on him to look at the place where this girl lived just once more. He listened keenly, but heard no sound. Then impulsively he pressed the horse forward to the crest of the brushy rise.

Below him lay the gutted timbers of the cabins, charred roofless skeletons that still smoked faintly. The burnt out windows gaped blackly, and charred sticks mingled with white ashes where a door had been. Out on the Hickory Lookout trail Slide made out the carcass of a horse, the thick hips tapering to the head, like an upset cone.

CHAPTER XVIII

HICKORY LOOKOUT

IT WAS twlilight as the three from Moccasin Lake flung off of their horses at the door of the Hickory Lookout cabin. There was no light within, but the door swung open for them, and in the dusk they could make out Partridge Geer.

"Git in!" the old man ordered.

Happy Bent, excited but efficient, herded old John Chase and Nancy into the little cabin ahead of him. He seized

the reins of their horses, and kept hold of them, catching them in the door as he slammed it shut behind him.

Talky Peters, terribly gaunt, and with his thin shoulders hunched stiffly over his flat chest, leaned against the opposite wall. His face was white and drawn, but his features showed a quizzical relief.

"Horses all lost?" he asked in a faint, husky voice. He did not move from his position against the wall.

"Every one," Chase told him. "But they wasn't ve'y many, anyway."

"Where's Jake Downey?"

"He's comin'. He held back some, to disconfute 'em. Some give us a run, but now they've stopped to wait up fo' the rest. We sho' outrun 'em."

"Their horses is done up," said Partridge Geer. "Well, whatcha goin' to do? Leave 'em have the horses, or try to hold the corral?"

"Rest o' yuh best stay in," said Talky. "But they's sixty-four best saddle stock in the corral. Me an' Cork Walters is goin' to be there."

"Then we all are. Best place anyway, with dark comin' on. Then we ain't boxed in, an' can shoot all sides. Most likely they'll fire this shanty, first thing, anyway. I know 'em."

"You look like you ought to be layin' down," said Nancy to Talky Peters.

The lean man flashed a smile at her, but did not reply.

"How long's Terry Shaw been gone?" Partridge Geer asked.

"Near two hours," said Talky. Then to John Chase, "Terry rode after the Box R riders, soon's we learned what was up."

"Can't get here for two-three hours more, prob'ly," Partridge Geer decided. "We got to stand 'em off good's we can."

"S'pose you take Nancy an' cut for it!" said Talky. "It's the horses they're after, not you!"

"No good," said John Chase. "Some of 'em has circled round behind, 'bout a mile out."

"Well, sweet cats!" broke out Geer. "Why'ncha say somepin'? Here! Grab yore guns an' every round yuh got an' git out o' here! Wait now! All to oncet, not one at a time. Got yore stuff?"

"Shore," said Talky. He moved forward a pace with a soft, careful step.

"All together, now," ordered Geer, his hand on the hasp. "Wait! Who's that?"

A flogged horse, running full stretch, was approaching, the seven stood looking at each other with solemn faces. Happy Bent rushed to the tiny parchment pane, already slit in a crisscross by Geer's knife, and peered out. The pounding hoofs trampled to a stop outside.

"It's Abner Cade!" cried Happy.

A heavy hand banged against the door, and Geer opened. Cade stumbled in and even in the failing light they could see that his face was white, tight-lipped.

"They're comin'!" he burst out. "They're circlin' all sides!" Then to Talky, whose hand gripped his gun, "Not now, you fool!"

"Come on—the corral!" Geer urged.

They jammed out the door, and raced for the rail inclosure three rods away.

"Wheah's the Vigilantes?" Chase demanded of Cade.

"They've rode out to the Lazy S, on that alarm, those that was in town. But I had a hunch an' come here. Figgered to see how you was makin' out at Moccasin Lake, but I had a brush with 'em near the head o' Red Crick, an' see I couldn't make it through."

They crawled through the widespread bars of the corral gate, and Cade gasped as he bent.

"Cade," said Chase, "yo' hurt!"

"Jest barely touched. Ne'mind me! How'll we do it, Geer?"

"John Chase with me in the middle," snapped Geer, "supportin' all sides. Nancy here, too. One man on each side! Now move!"

"They's one extry," said Talky instantly. "Cork, up on the roof o' the bunkhouse! See they don't fire that!"

"Leave it burn!" raged Geer.

"Cork, you go!" Talky rasped. "I'm goin' to take keer o' this proputty!"

Cork Walters silently crawled through the bars and raced for the shanty, and

Talky went into a fit of hard, strangling coughing that doubled him up. About them the sixty-four head of saddle stock milled and trampled, excited by the hurrying men.

"Here they come!" yelled Cork Walters from the roof of the shack. "Look out west over the rise!"

"Sa-a-ave yore powder!" yelled Geer. "Git back thar! Every man stay on his own side! Hold yore fire!"

Through the thickness of the dusk to the west, rising suddenly over a ridge three hundred yards beyond the corral, came a slender stream of Cheyenne riders, perhaps twenty in all. Though they outnumbered the defenders of the corral three to one, they were yet at the disadvantage of mounted attackers against close-shooting men behind cover. Only utter desperation, their extreme need of horses, could have driven them to attack under such conditions.

Little Wolf himself and the main body were far away, hiding close, without enough horses left to travel. This party of warriors was at the moment riding almost every travel-worthy pony that was left to the Cheyennes. Three men were at this time riding to Little Wolf with the handful of mounts captured at Moccasin Lake. Two others had found as many again in a small herd upon the Arrow C range. The herd at Hickory Lookout would enable them to push on at the old gallop; they must be had at whatever cost in lives.

The Cheyennes were only a tiny handful of struggling people, with thirteen thousand troops on the move against them, and every cowman in the west prepared to fight on sight. Yet these few, a mere speck in the vastness of the prairies, were like a drop of vicious acid running across a man's hand; until struck out of existence they had the power to destroy all that lay in their path, for these were men fighting for their lives.

"Save yore powder!" roared Geer again, as the horsemen charged down upon the corral.

The screaming Cheyenne war-cries now sounded, and the column suddenly split to circle the corral in either direction.

"Let 'em have!"

The west side of the corral was Cade's station, and his six-gun spoke three times. Over the corral hummed a single bullet from Cork Walter's rifle on the roof of the shack.

Two Cheyenne cayuses went down. Behind them scrambled the unhorsed Indians, and in a moment a slow, steady fire began to splinter the rails close to where Cade stood, coming from behind the fallen Indian mounts.

As the circling file passed Talky Peters' side of the corral, firing into the stronghold as they rode, an Indian went down, and a third horse. It was hard shooting in the fast, going light, with the marks whirling past as hard as ponies could gallop, but Talky knew his gun. A horse screamed in the corral, and tumbled heavily.

At the smell of blood the whole herd went crazy with fear, and thundered milling about the quarter acre, plunging against the heavy timbers. In the jam they lashed out with their heels, and some went down as others cannoned into them.

Partridge Geer was shouting some order, but he could not be heard above the squeals of the horses and the thundering trample of their hoofs.

"Let out the stock!" yelled Talky Peters, and Happy Bent, on the gate side, heard him.

Happy hurriedly threw down the bars of the gate, barely stumbling out of the way as a dozen panic-stricken horses blundered into the opening and thrashed their way out.

Now the attack changed; the riding Cheyennes drew off, and for a short space it seemed that they had been beaten off. Happy Bent got three bars up again, and in the temporary quiet the main body of the horses calmed somewhat. It was so dark now that good shooting was impossible. No one could see any distance with certainty, and the continued milling of the horses inside drowned all the small

sounds that might have brought them word of the Cheyennes.

"Put down them bars!" yelled Geer. "Yuh wanta die?"

Bent's gun began to speak again.

"They're firin' the cabin!" he yelled.

"Put down them bars!"

An acrid smell of smoke drifted through the corral, increasing the nervousness of the partially quieted ponies. A slow, steady fire began to open upon the defenders from three sides.

On the side of the cabin Cork's rifle still made approach more difficult, though a brisk crackling and the smell of smoke told them that a brush fire was probably blazing against the cabin's eastern wall.

Partridge Geer had been forced to take a stand on the northern side when Cork left the corral for the cabin roof. From there they could hear him shouting commands and cautions.

"Ho-old yore fire! Can't shoot nothin' yuh can't see! Wait fer the rush!"

"They's a Injun on yer left, Talky!" yelled Walters from the cabin. "I see him plain!"

Talky's gun didn't answer.

Cade was firing slowly, deliberately, in spite of all Geer could say. He was standing bolt upright against the timbers, his braced arm thrust through the poles.

"Git down, yuh old fool! Git down, —— yuh!"

"They're comin' in!" yelled Talky. "Gawd Almighty, what's that in the corner?"

In the darkness, with the confused smother of sounds telling contradictory stories and the haunting odor of smoke, the fight became a jumbled nightmare, in which the separated men could not make out what their friends were doing, nor what was going on. Thick dust clouds rolled up from the feet of the unquiet horses, turning near forms to hazy ghosts.

"They're in! They're in!"

"Cork, fer Gawd's sake come 'ere!"

Talky, unhit, but with his broken chest torn anew by the shouting, was on hands and knees, coughing blood, his pistol useless in his clenched hand.

"Where are yuh? Talky, where are yuh? —— these cayuses!"

"Abner! Lay into 'em thar!"

"Cade's down!"

"Nance, stay here! Leave him lie!"

The corral seemed peopled with shadows, dim crouching forms that ran among the plunging horses. The gate was open again, and some of the Cheyennes were trying to bar it lest the horses scatter and be lost to them after all, in the dark. A mad war cry rang in their midst.

"With me, in the middle!" yelled Geer. "Talky! Bent!"

"They've got Talky!"

"Happy! Where's that fool boy?"

Cork Walters, Geer, Nancy, and John Chase now lay or knelt in the middle of the corral. Evidently the Indians dared not let the horses run wild in the dark, for they had barred the gate. Those in the middle, now embuttressed behind fallen horses, knew that this meant death to them all, unless help came. John Chase alone stood up in the middle of the group, pivoting upon his flat heels, the flame from his long forty-five flashing out this way and that into the murk.

"Pa, git down!"

Nancy Chase, with Cade's pistol belt in one hand and his gun in the other, was firing spasmodically from behind the carcass of a horse. A Cheyenne loomed over her, then crumpled into a heap.

Geer was yelling something over and over in the Cheyenne tongue, and from somewhere near at hand an unseen warrior answered, and laughed.

"Sa-ave yore powder! Jack Chase, git down!"

"Let 'em have!"

"Steady, steady! Make it count! Easy now!"

"Give 'em ——!"

War cries, mad trampling thunder, crashing explosions of guns, smell of powder, a seepage of red light from the shanty, blazing pistol-stabs into the dark—

A single voice rose above the uproar in a mad piercing yell, jabbering something in Cheyenne. Only Partridge Geer and

the Indians themselves knew what it said.

"The troops! The troops! I am a Cheyenne! To your horses! The troops are on us!"

The shadowy figures that had rushed the corral fell away. Some clear head had thrown down the corral gate again, and horses were rushing out, close hazed by yelling warriors.

"The troops! The troops!"

Into the strangle of horses at the corral gate a crazy gray catapulted from the outside, mouth wide, slathering foam, blind with running. By force of shock the crazily ridden horse jammed through the mill at the gate, knocking down a pony in its path. A shadowy form cried out as it went down under the insane hoofs. The gray horse wheeled rearing, until it pawing fore hoofs struck at the sky, then it plunged through the smother in the corral.

"To your horses! Mount, in the name of Little Wolf! A hundred are on us! Run! Run!"

The wild yell cut through the smother of sound, the Cheyenne words ringing in the tumult.

A Cheyenne hesitated, dodging the hoofs of the gray horse, and a snapping rope-end laid open his face. In a moment the pressure eased, and the war-cries ceased. The corral emptied save for a residue of panicky horses which floundered in each other's way as they funneled themselves out into the open in a trickling stream. The roof of the cabin broke into flame, and by the sudden orange light the people in the center saw that the Cheyennes were gone.

Near the gate the gray horse was down, trying to rise. The man who had ridden it had disappeared.

WITHOUT a moment's relaxation Partridge Geer began his check. He sent Chase to where Cade lay, and Cork to look for Happy Bent. He himself ran to where Talky had been.

He found the lean cowboy trying to get up.

"You hurt, Talky?"

Peters tried to speak, but choked, he shook his head.

"You lay down," Geer ordered.

He caught the cowboy in his arms, and gently laid him on his face.

"You'll feel purty good in a minute."

He went to the place near the corral gate where Cork Walters and Nancy were bending over Happy Bent.

Happy grinned painfully.

"Laig hurts. Hawse made a misstep."

"Busted," said Corky. "Gimme knife!"

Old John Chase came up now, and Geer turned to him.

"Jack Chase," said Geer, "d'yuh know who 'twas shouted them Injuns off?"

"Don't know no Injuns by name," Chase growled.

"D'yuh know how he done it?"

Chase shrugged.

"He yelled at 'em that there was troops comin'. That man, on that gray, was an old hand o' yourn. That was Ben Morgan, or I'm a Injun myself!"

"Good gosh," exclaimed Happy Bent, "gone plumb red!"

"Mebbe," said Geer, "mebbe he's gone red, an' mebbe he jest happened to have an idee in the right place."

"But he warned 'em that the troops was comin'!" said Happy.

"Well," Geer answered, "an' where are they?"

"There ain't any?"

"See any?"

They looked at each other.

"I tried somethin' o' the sort myself, to drive 'em off," said Geer. "Mebbe yuh heard me shoutin' at 'em. But they knowed I was ag'in 'em I guess. But on the spur o' the moment that way, I guess they must o' believed *him*, partly, anyway."

"It's onnatural to go livin' with Injuns," said Chase dourly, "if he's white like you said."

"Mebbe so," Geer snorted, "but it shore come in handy fer you, old feller! That's the thanks a man gits in this life, mark me!"

"Ain't criticizin'," Chase mumbled, his mind away.

There was a silence.

"How's Cade?" Geer asked suddenly.

"Abner?" said Chase softly. "He's through."

OUT on the prairie to the north, mounted on an indifferent Box R horse that he had mounted in the confusion after the gray was down, Slide Morgan plodded aimlessly. The Cheyennes were gone, carrying with them a score of stolen horses and the bodies of their dead.

Utter exhaustion was upon him, once more the dregs of excitement found him without purpose or destination, weary, and incredibly old. The rich, maize-colored harvest moon was riding high, and on the prairie was a mellow peace. In the distance a coyote cried, as it had cried last night, and last year, and always, a song that was ages old. Morgan plodded on, and on—

His horse shied, nearly unseating him. On the ground lay a dark shape, which the horse did not wish to go near. Slide dismounted and led the horse toward it, a reassuring hand upon the hackamore. The dark shape was the body of a man, a cowboy, by the clothes.

Morgan bent over it, and turned the limp form, that he might see the face. Then suddenly the horse was forgotten as Slide dropped to his knees, calling the man's name.

"Jake! Jake!"

Swiftly, with a trembling hand, he groped upon Downey's chest for some sign of life; but the flesh was cold, and the blood there was already almost dry.

"Jake, fer God's sake! Jake!"

The hot tears burst forth and ran down his face, and for a moment the prairie swam sickeningly. When the dizziness had passed he took Jake's handkerchief from his neck and with his shaking left hand drew it crookedly across the still face. Incoherently a fragment of the letter Jake had put in his saddlebags came to him—

"—you take Ironhead—best horse there is—"

Stumbling, with blind eyes, his body racked and shaken, Slide reached his grazing horse, and somehow managed to get up.

"Jake's dead—Jake's dead—Jake's dead," he said over and over.

His moccasined heels rammed into the horse's belly, and at last the animal sensed something wrong about this man on his back, and ran. The cool wind whispered through Slide's tangled hair as he rode and rode and rode.

CHAPTER XIX

THE SONG OF THE EMPTY BAR

SLIDE MORGAN raised his fogged head from his arms and stared into the dark. At first he could not remember where he was, or who; then memory slowly returned to him, as cold and cheerless as the deserted barroom in which he sat.

He was at a table in the rear of Slim's Place, the bar in which he had first met Talky Peters. Up in front, seeming a long way off, he could make out the bleared windows of the bar, dimly gray with the light of the moon upon the first snow. When last he had looked up, there had been visible through the dirty panes the lights of the Happy Chance. But now the prosperous saloon was as dark as the one that had fallen upon poverty and evil days.

There had been a dance in the Happy Chance that night, a big one, with many ponies in the streets, and the sound of extra violins, an accordion and an improvised drum. Sometimes the shouting of the dance caller had penetrated into the back of Slim's grimy bar, bringing news of gayety and the lights of companionship into which Morgan felt no desire to enter.

"Left hand ladies, right hand gents,
Swing yer gal, swing yer gal,
Right hand ladies, left hand gents,
Swing yer gal, why doncha?"

That was over now, and it was just as well. Better the quiet and the gloom, and the bottle before him that was not going to run dry.

Morgan's clothes were new and warm, yet he was cold. The fire in the pot-bellied stove had long since gone out, but how late it was he had no means of judging.

How long he had haunted Slim's Place he did not know. Many days certainly; more likely weeks, but it seemed even longer than that. Sometimes during the day he stepped outside, to sniff the air and stretch his legs; but he soon turned into the bar again, to sit at the rearmost table that was now recognized as his, to sit and sit and speak to none.

He must have been there a long time, he knew, for the store of gold pieces in his pocket was running low. Perhaps he should have hunted out all of the gold that he had once left under the bunkhouse floor at Moccasin Lake, instead of stopping to dig out only a handful. But what he had would have to suffice.

His food had been stale sandwiches, given him without charge with his drink. He didn't need much to eat. Only the bottle was important—it must never be allowed to go empty. It stood between himself and something else, something that he feared to face—although what that thing was he could not have said.

He had half expected to be fired upon in Roaring River, but it was as if no one had known him. He had hardly been the subject of a curious glance. Perhaps after all the world had moved on and Cheyenne Morgan was no longer of any consequence. It didn't matter either way.

Slim's bar was a good place for him. The dust of the prairie wind lay thick in the corners, and the air was laden with stale fumes of liquors and antedated tobacco. An old place, a dead place, old and stale like himself.

No shuffling rats disturbed the night in Slim's Place, for the pickings there were lean. Yet the empty bar was not without its voice. A tin clock, on the shelf where the bottles stood, spoke steadily through the small hours of the night, its metallic voice uncommonly loud in the abnormal quiet. It was a monotonous song the clock sang, yet it was not always the same. Lately, when his drink had failed to bring him sleep, he had learned that it was a varying clock, whose ticks were seldom twice alike. He listened to it now.

"Click clack, click clack, click clack,
Kung ting, chunga, chunga,
Whackaroo, whackaroo, whee jack,
Tinkatoo, kickapoo, tongue gag,
Click clack, click clack, chunga—"

It was a foolish jargon that the clock spoke, meaningless, frivolous, but its everlasting regularity throughout the stillness of the long hours gave it a sinister importance, drawing his mind back to it again and again. He strained his ears to make out what it was the clock said.

"Click tuck, chung ting, chunga,
Talkalong, talkalong, wing see,
Click kuh, click kuh, snap back,
Ratatan, cat luck, snickersnee,
Kung tung, flickatoo, rick rack—"

There was no stopping place in that song; it droned on forever, with no place to quit, just as his life went on without aim, with no decent stopping place nor fitting close. It was tolling off the slow beats of his heart. When the senseless song of the clock stopped, he would stop too, and there would be an end to disorder, and searching, an end to something as senseless as the clock itself. He half hoped for the hour that the clock would stop. He listened to see if it were not slowing down.

"Chunga, click kuh, snap back,
Hawkwing, chuckatuck, sing song,
Stingeree, snap it off, stop that,
Keep it up, click tack, click tack—"

It was reading the story of his life. Meaninglessly, cryptically it was naming the innumerable episodes of his days, incidents that were meaningless and cryptic too. Presently, after a long time, the clock would catch up with him, then there

would be nothing more for it to tell, and it must stop. He hated the song of that clock in the empty bar, but even while he half hoped for its end, he dreaded the hour that it would stop with an unreasonable dread.

"Click tack, shuckalong, caulk stick,
Bum chuck, ratatoo, hit that,
Jogalong, jogalong, click tack,
Chunga, chunga, chunga—"

With a trembling hand he groped for the bottle, cautiously feeling for it in the dark lest it be upset, then drank in sparing swallows. The liquor burned his throat, but it was a harsh burn, ungrateful. As he set the bottle down the clock song pressed itself upon him again. There was no escaping it in this empty bar, yet the world held no other place for him to go.

That Talky Peters had been shot he had heard, but the story had stopped there and he had not known that the man was still alive until Peters himself one day walked into Slim's Place.

Talky had ridden into Roaring River on a buckboard and he coughed as he walked unsteadily into the bar. But it was evident that he still clung to his old-time way of buying one round in Slim's Place, before invading the more popular Happy Chance.

Slide Morgan had sat motionless, staring, too astonished to rise or speak. Then when he started to call to Talky the liquor that was in him had muffled his tongue, and he had waited a moment for his head to clear.

In that moment Talky had turned and stared at him, down the length of the long bar—then turned away, no shade of recognition having crossed his face. Behind his bottle Slide sat motionless, stunned. After that, except when he called to Slim for a fresh bottle, he made no further effort to speak to any man.

Slide wondered what the tedious song of the clock would say when it came to the time when Talky had passed him by. But the clock had not come to that yet; it still had a long way to go.

"Ratatan, jog trot, pot luck,
Chunga, click tack, chunga—"

There were shapes moving before him in the dark, things that he knew were not there, yet were more real than the bar itself, or the nagging clock. They were dim and half-formed, he could not yet make out what they were. Presently he would know, and another mile-stone would have been passed. He drank again, but even more sparingly than before; those unliving, moving shapes must not overwhelm him before the clock had finished the song. He did not know what was at the end, and he little cared, but he knew that he must wait for it, long though it might be.

"Shuckasee, hawk top, lock wing,
Dragalong, click tack, click tack—"

The story was not yet complete. The clock could name every meaningless thing that he had done, every empty place that he had been, yet the story would not be done. Something else was ahead, a last thing, that must take place before he was through. Until it was done the tireless droning clock could not finish its tale. He must wait for this thing that was not done yet, the thing that must come at the end of the song. Wait, drink, and wait, but the drink must be sparing now, lest those dim shapes come too close. If that happened there could be no end to the song of the clock, nor end of waiting, nor end of sitting in the coldness of the empty bar—

"Click tack, click tack, click tack,
Chunga, chunga, chunga—"

It was noontime again. Slim had opened up the bar, but no customers came and the dour fat man drowsed sourly over an ancient newspaper and chewed tobacco. He had laid a couple of dry cheese sandwiches before Slide, along with his fresh bottle, but Morgan left them untouched. The sun was bright on the snow outside but the dirty panes dimmed it, and in the rear where Morgan sat, stiff and inert, the place was still full of dusty gloom.

In the quiet the song of the tin clock went on. It had raced and rasped loudly when Slim had rewound it, renewing its strength. But now it had returned to its old pace again, the pace that it had held throughout the long days of Slide's sojourn and the empty nights when he had sometimes slept on the floor against the wall, and sometimes sat, drowsily staring into the dark.

Some one was at the door. The old wood stuck, shuddered, and then gave open, as if scandalized that any one should force an entrance so early in the day.

The man that came in was broad-faced and pink of skin. Silvery bristle covered his face almost to the eyes, and under his bony nose was a short gray mustache. Slide noted him dully, but could not remember having seen the man before.

"Have a drink," the man said, almost fiercely. "Rye!"

Slim said "Thanks," and set glasses and a bottle on the bar.

When they had tossed the liquor from the little glasses the stranger slapped his glass briskly on the bar and spoke.

"I'm lookin' for a man named Benjamin Morgan," he stated, his strong voice desecrating the winter silence.

"Never heard of him," said Slim.

Morgan suddenly spoke. He had no reason for doing so, but the words came out of him without his coming to any sort of a decision.

"I'm him." His voice was thick, unfamiliar to himself.

The two looked at him in some surprize, the stranger peering into the gloom.

"Who's that?" he asked of Slim.

"Steady customer," Slim answered.

The man leaned over the bar toward Slim and conferred in an undertone. The barkeeper shook his head.

Morgan's mind wandered. Above the low voices, perceivable through them as icicles can be seen through smoke, he heard the persistent song of the clock. And now as he listened it seemed to him that he could make out what the clock said for the first time, and his hair stirred.

"Jake's dead, Jake's dead, Jake's dead,
"Chunga, chunga, chunga—"

He strained his ears to see if he could read the same words in the clock rhythm again, but the refrain did not recur. The song of the clock was nearing its close.

The stranger was coming to his table. "You Benjamin Morgan?"

"Yes."

"You know Partridge Geer?"

"Who?"

"Partridge Geer!"

Morgan's fogged mind groped.

"Geer, Geer!" repeated the impatient stranger. "Yuh dumb?"

"He's drunk," Slim explained fatuously.

"Geer," repeated Morgan. "Seems like—I dunno; I guess so."

"Well, he says he's a friend o' yourn, anyway," said the broad-faced old man.

"Ain't got any," said Morgan dazedly. "Crazy."

"Wait around 'til he gets sober," suggested Slim. "Yo're talkin' to nothin' at all but about seven gallon o' whisky."

"Can't wait," said the stranger. "I gotta git south. Either I'll git this idee over to him or I won't, an' there's the sum an' total of it."

"I'm sober," said Morgan, a little more clearly.

"This Partridge Geer is in a bad way," the man went on. "Wouldn't beat me if he passed in his chips, this time. He's alone in a tumblin' shanty, forty miles from nothin'. All the neighborin' ranchers has been burned out, seems. He needs somebody to go up there an' take keer of him. I got a loaded mule, outside here, bought with money he give me. Got anythin' to ride?"

"No."

"No saddle nor nothin'?"

"No."

"Well, I'll get them things for yuh. Yuh don't seem to have much gumption yerself. He asks fer you to come an' see him through."

"Through what?"

"Holy Moses! I'm tellin' yuh the

man's sick! If you won't go I'll git somebody else. He asked for you, an' I'm passin' the word. That clears me. Now will yuh go, or won'tcha?"

Slide's fuddled mind grappled feebly with this question, only half understood. He was slipping back into the fog again. Instinctively he listened for the voice of the clock, as a drunken man gropes for a familiar object against which to rest.

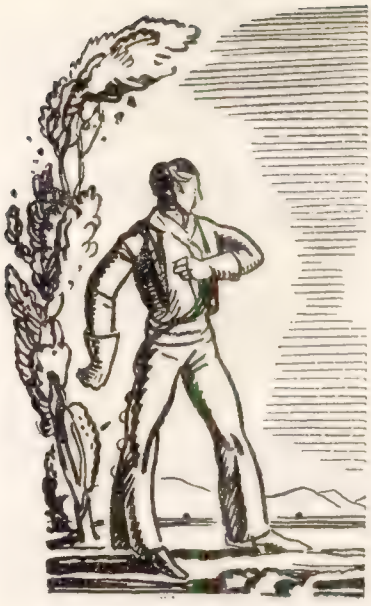
Then he realized that the bar was completely silent at last. The clock had stopped.

"I'll go."

TO BE CONTINUED

Here's

Salt



SIXTO SCOTT, sprawling on his back abaft the mast of his Bolívar-bound piragua, lifted the straw sombrero from his face, yawned and rolled his head to squint at the sinking sun. Then, raising his long body on an elbow, he peered down along the tree-topped western bank of the Orinoco. After a leisurely survey of the interminable yellow clay wall and its green timber-tangle he voiced unintelligible monosyllables.

"Huh?" I grunted, sitting up.

A sidewise nod of his shaggy head was the only explanation; a nod toward the chocolate-faced Guahibo Indian at the tiller, who, I now perceived, was altering the course. Another aborigine came plodding aft to shorten sail. The little craft turned her nose toward a small indentation half a mile ahead in the western wall. Another blazing day was nearing its end and it was time to make camp for the night.

We arose and stretched in unison, then stood idly watching the approaching port. As we drew closer a grayish blob against the verdure became a clay house, half masked by unkempt plantains and weedy brush. No canoe lay at the water's edge, no figure appeared amid the greenery to give us greeting. Desertion, perhaps death, had set upon the place the unmistakable seal of brooding emptiness.

"Esteban Pardo's old place," volunteered Sixto, in a sleepy tone. "Used to keep cattle. Died year before last."

"From what?" I yawned.

"Oh, natural causes. Just got sick and passed out. He was pretty old."

With that he lounged forward to superintend the mooring.

When the sail was down and the keelless ship lay snug beside the shelving shore we debarked down a long plank bridging deck and earth. After us came our men —Scott's taciturn half-squad of Indians, my three talkative mestizos—to search the neglected plantation for edibles and find firewood for Teófilo, my negro cook. We two whites sauntered into the abandoned house, scouted warily for snakes or wasps, found none, and squatted in the welcome shadows to cool overheated blood and smoke *cigarrillos*. And there, saying little, we stayed until our monotonous travel-food was brought.

At the first taste of the boiled rice and fish I scowled. At the second I swore—as often before—at that slovenly Teófilo who, through forgetfulness or sheer laziness, frequently neglected all seasoning.

"—— that nigger! This is about the millionth time he's left out the salt."

"Salt," copyright, 1927, by Arthur O. Friel.

ARTHUR O. FRIEL'S

New Story of the Orinoco

"I can do without it," equably responded Sixto. "Gone without it many a time. Up in the Guahibo country there's no salt to be had."

"That's no reason why we shouldn't have it now. Hey, Teófilo!"

Silence.

"Teófilo!"

If the miscreant heard, he dodged answer. Another, however, heeded my angry shout. At the doorway appeared the youngest of my mestizos.

"Señor?" he respectfully inquired.

"*Sal, muchacho!*" I shook a hand as if sprinkling. "*Sal! Pronto!*"

"*Sí, señor.*"

He was gone. I put down the rice and bit into a mango. As I chewed the stringy fruit I felt my companion's eyes on me and, meeting his gaze, found on his bronzed face an odd expression.

"That's queer, *hombre*," he declared, with a reminiscent grin. "Right here in Esteban Pardo's house you sing out Esteban's words—words that meant a lot, too. '*Sal, muchacho, sal!*' Yes, sir, that's a coincidence and a half. You never heard about Esteban and his salt, did you?"

"No. What about it?"

Again I was compelled to wait for an answer. Scooping up a capacious mouthful of the tasteless grains, the big Colombian masticated in ruminative fashion, his bearded jaws seemingly working on a cud of thought while his deep brown eyes rested absently on the bare wall opposite. Teófilo, shuffling sheepishly in with the required condiment, received my caustic benediction and departed apparently unnoticed. When my rice was seasoned, however, the trader's hand automatically moved over to grasp the shaker and put it to generous use. We ate on in silence.

The meal was finished and fresh cigarets glowing before Sixto spoke. Then he said only—

"Let's take a walk."

We emerged into the last light of day. Along a threadlike path, already nearly obliterated by weeds and brush, we passed in single file; his huge frame towering before and above me, blocking all view ahead and so dwarfing my own medium stature that I felt much like a boy plodding at the heels of his father. Down along a short row of old palm huts —once the quarters of peons—we trudged, and on into a belt of forest. From this we presently debouched into a cleared space, open at the west.

Beyond that opening lay the *sabana*, the rolling plains, dotted here and there

by island-like hills and water-hole *moriche* palms, which stretched away for numberless leagues to the haze-hidden Andes; wild reaches peopled only by mysterious wild men and wilder beasts; home of untamed aborigines, refuge of outlawed whites, far-flung feeding-ground of cattle, some owned, some ownerless. To this vast wilderness I gave a long look—Sixto, only a glance. His attention focused on something nearer at hand.

"Yes, it's still here," he muttered.

My gaze followed his, to rest on a crude rock-and-mud fireplace, roughly semicircular, on which a blackened pole lay askew. Scattered near lay several old bones and a skull or two, apparently bovine. Just beyond grew thick bush, merging into the tall riverside woods.

"Old Esteban's *barbacoa*, where he barbecued a calf or a tapir now and then," explained Sixto. "That's the old spit-pole on top, a piece of mora wood, hard as iron. He made his peons do the butchering and roasting down here because his girl had an aversion for blood, or even raw meat."

He grew silent again, his gaze roving now to the open west, as if seeing in its lifeless expanse something invisible to me. Mosquitoes settled on my neck, and I stirred impatiently.

"Well, what of it?" I demanded.

"Well, there's a little story, old chap, which culminated right here; that story about Esteban and his salt. I'll spin it to you presently, back at the house. Take another look and we'll go. Notice that bunch of bush just beyond the *barbacoa*. Thick enough to hide half a dozen men, eh? And look out to westward again, out into the open space—where a devil-man and a devil-horse came from and where they went back again. That's where the thing reached its complete finish, out yonder where no man saw."

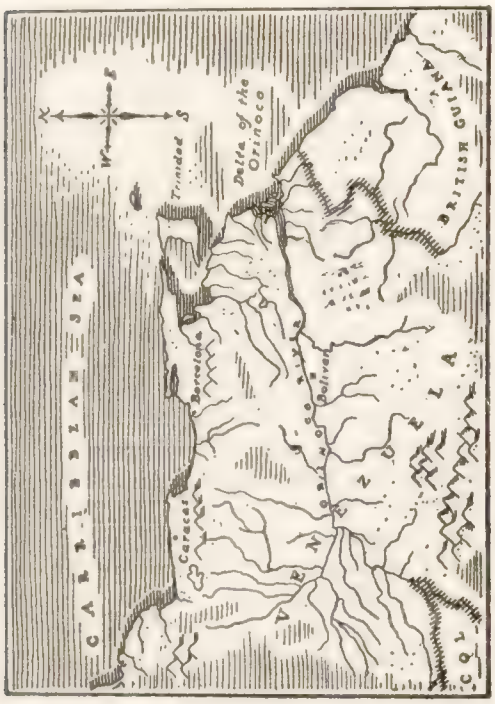
We stood a minute longer. The sun had gone, a few fantastic clouds floated in a fiery afterglow and along the ground crept gradually graying twilight. Conjured, perhaps, by the words just spoken, a weird figure evolved itself from the largest of the crimson clouds—a shape suggestive of a centaur, its equine legs and barrel extended at the gallop, its human bust and head reaching fiercely forward; a diabolic creature straining in mad career down into red inferno. For the time of a half-dozen slow breaths it held its form. Then it folded on itself, bloated and was merely a shapeless hulk adrift in vacancy.

If my companion observed that phantom he refrained from comment. Once more he glanced at the place of barbecue, then moved away. Back along the path we ambled to the house, where the men now had hung our hammocks and set a candle in a bottle-neck. And there, while the wavering little light cast queer shadows about the main room of the home of Esteban Pardo, was told the tale of the vanished owner and others gone for all time.

TO BEGIN right, *amigo*, I should tell you that you're now in the State of Apure, in Venezuela. We left Colombia behind us when we passed the mouth of the Rio Meta, so now everything west of this Orinoco, as well as east of it, is Venezuelan territory. Not that it matters much in terms of government, because there is practically no government along here anyway except when the governor, away up north, starts out on a rampage and cleans up his district by shooting every bad *hombre* he can catch. He did that about two years ago, just after old Esteban died. That's why it's so quiet along here now—he shot nearly everybody in sight hereabouts, and new settlers have been slow to come in.

But the main point about Apure is that it's cattle country; open *sabana* such as you just saw, dry looking, but well watered by a network of small rivers and *caños* and well treed along all the watercourses and around the swamps. The herds are not so big now as they were years ago, because a plague set in and thinned them out pretty badly. But there are still plenty of them out yonder, some of them guarded and some not.

And, as you probably know, cattle country is likely to raise other animals besides bulls and cows—cattle killers and cattle thieves. The killers here are the big *tigres* and the thieves are men—sometimes wild Indians, but usually white or near-white men who are—ah—what is that name you use in the States? Rustlers! That's it.



Well, this section along here used to be a rustlers' paradise. About every man along this bank for many a mile was a cattle thief. It was the easiest and quickest way for a chap to make a little money; about the only way there was, in fact, except to raise cane and make sugar or rum from it and that's slow work. Down south of here, you see, was the Funes army, holding the Territorio de Amazonas. Amazonas, being rubber country, raises little food. The army had to eat, and good fresh beef was always in demand. So what could be simpler than to buy it from these fellows along the shore of Apure? And for the Apure chaps, what was easier than to ride out and round up a bunch of unprotected cattle, drive them up to the bank, and sell them to Funes foragers? The thing was as natural as the succession of day and dark.

So it went on for years, until this Rustlers' Row was notorious all along the river and the big cattle owners raised such a roar that the governor and his soldiers went on the warpath. They came up here, grabbed every man in sight, gave him a drumhead court-martial and, unless he could show clean hands, executed him *pronto*. Since nearly every man hereabouts had his hands in the game clear up to the shoulders, the section was practically depopulated. Maybe old Esteban would have gone out by the same route if the sickness hadn't carried him off first. He was a bit too old to ride out on raids himself, but his peons were good riders, and he always had several horses here, and quite a few cattle which he probably never paid for. With all his neighbors helping themselves to what they found in the *sabana*, it would have been rather simple of him to be too virtuous. And before he died he proved that he wasn't simple.

But he was a pretty good old fellow, Esteban. So were most of the others along the line—poor devils who were peaceable enough but needed money and, seeing easy money right at hand, took it. They had to live and some had families to provide for, and provided as best they could—and got shot for it. There were much worse men out on the *sabana* who were not caught or shot, because they were out of reach—murderers and outlaws beside whom these riverbank chaps were holy saints, and the shootings here had no effect on them. The thievery kept on just the same, though not so much of it. What really ended the 'longshore beef trade was the collapse of the Funes rule down south and the break-up of his gang.

It was one of those hard *hombres* out on the plains who finally made Esteban call for salt. They're a wild lot out there, those drifters who ride with prices on

their heads and with hands always near a pistol-butt or a knife-haft. And the worst are those who ride alone. As a general thing birds of a feather are apt to flock together, even if they fight one another after flocking. When you find one who never takes a partner you'll do well to step wide of him; he's dangerous and probably treacherous too. And this Diablo Caballo, who always rode *solitario* and never—

Yes, that's the name, Diabalo Caballo, Devil Horse. A nickname, of course, but, like most Spanish nicknames, well chosen. His real name was Cevallos, and he was a demon, wanted by both Venezuela and Colombia for ugly crimes. And he rode a horse as damnable as himself—a stallion that was a killer but seemed unkillable. He tried to kill his master a thousand times, probably, and that master deliberately tortured him in return—but never tamed him. Twin devils they were, in mind if not in shape. So men called them Diablo Cevallos and *diablo caballo*, which, being pronounced almost the same, became one name for both of them. I'll tell you more about them presently.

Now it was about four—no, five years ago when I first stopped here and made the acquaintance of old Esteban. I had made my down-river journey to Bolívar, sold out my cargo of Indian hammocks, taken on my supplies, and was sailing back. Just below here, about midafternoon, the wind failed. So I did the only thing possible, dropped anchor and waited for a new breeze. It was a long time in coming. Meanwhile two or three men came to the edge of the bank and yelled out to me, asking whether I had anything to trade. As I do no trading outside my own territory, I just ignored them and before long they stopped their noise. A little later, though, a canoe put out from this port, a couple of peons paddling. They came alongside, looked curiously at my Indians, and then asked whether I had any medicine.

"No," said I, shortly. "And if I had any I would not sell. I am no river peddler."

At that the young fellow in the stern looked so disheartened that I changed my tone a bit.

"Who is sick?" I inquired.

"My woman," he told me, in a despondent way. "She has a fever and grows worse. Unless I can get medicine I shall lose them both."

"Both?"

"*Sí*. She is with child."

"Oh," said I. Then up spoke the bow paddler, an older man.

"It is his first, *señor*," he explained, with a backward nod. "His first woman, his first babe. It is hard to lose them. Have you not even a grain of quinine?"

That reminded me of something forgotten. I did have quinine, and plenty of it, though not for my own use. I'm quite healthy and seldom need any medicine except a shot of rum. If I do get sick I rely on the Indian remedies which have never yet failed to cure whatever ailed me. The quinine now down in the hold was intended for the commandant of the Funes garrison at Maipures—a very decent sort of brigand—who had asked me to fetch back a good supply; and after packing it I had put it out of my mind. If it had been merely a man who now needed it I should have kept it out of mind, too, for if you once start dosing sick men along this river there's no end to it. But a young mother with her first baby—

"Now that you speak of it, perhaps there is a little," I admitted. "I shall see."

So I dropped below, dug out a bottle of the febrifuge and climbed up again. Just then a weak breeze set in, too feeble to carry me much farther that day, but strong enough to push the piragua up to this port. The peons, catching a glimpse of the bottle, grinned joyously; then, as I told them I should tie up along shore, shoved off and paddled fast home with the news. My boys hauled the hook, and we swung in to the same spot where the ship lies tonight.

By the time I landed, everybody but the sick mother-to-be was out to meet me. Half a dozen mestizo peons, a couple of

their women and a child or two had gathered at the shore, and here at the house were Esteban and his woman. Indian, she was, but decidedly good-looking; tall, well formed, regular-featured and less than half his age; a big girl from some *sabana* tribe whom he had gotten hold of somehow—I never asked questions. Esteban himself was a mild-appearing old fellow, gray-haired, thin and slow-moving, a little lame in the legs. His face was kind, his eyes rather soft and his manner gentle. In all, he seemed so harmless as to be out of place on Rustlers' Row—although, as I've said before, his neighbors weren't really bad fellows.

"*Buenas tardes, señor.*" He bowed politely. "You are most welcome. I am Esteban Pardo."

"Sixto Scott, of the Rio Vichada," I responded. "Where is the sick one?"

"Felipe will direct you." He nodded toward the peon who had been steersman of the canoe. "When you return you will join me at table, eh?"

"Perhaps." And I walked off with Felipe to one of the palm huts behind here.

As we went down the path I remarked—

"Your *patrón* seems a good man."

"*Sí!*" was all Felipe replied. But the heartiness of his tone proved that Esteban was well liked by his men. It is not every *patrón* whose workers speak of him in that way.

The boy had not exaggerated his woman's sickness. She was practically eaten up by fever. A frail little thing, not over sixteen years old, too weak to speak above a whisper, she lay in her hammock and looked hopefully at me. I asked a few questions to assure myself that the fever was malarial—otherwise the quinine might do no good—and measured out a stiff dose of the remedy. She took it eagerly, though she choked in getting it down. Then, after guessing at the proper amount to give her in future, I gave Felipe the whole bottle and instructions for using it.

As I went out he followed, asking under his breath:

"Do you think she will live, *señor?*"

"I think you will save her but lose the child," was my opinion.

He looked sober for a second, then cheered up.

"*Cra,* the baby does not matter so much," he grinned. "Another one can easily take its place."

"Just so," I laughed. And it turned out just as we predicted. The mother lived, the babe did not and with no unnecessary delay a new one came to replace it—a lusty boy with lungs like those of a howling monkey. And for some reason or other they named the brat Sixto.

So far as I was concerned that was about the last of Felipe and his joys and sorrows. Having done all I could I left him at his humble home and came back here to become better acquainted with his *patrón.*

ESTEBAN was sitting in the doorway when I returned, and rose quickly—though a bit stiffly—when he saw me approach. His first words were of the sick woman.

"How do you find matters, señor?" he asked, with a tilt of the head toward Felipe's quarters.

"Not very good, but not altogether bad," says I. And I told him what I had done, and what I had told Felipe.

At first he looked pleased, then a little alarmed.

"*Bueno!*" he smiled. "A good boy and a good girl, those two. And it is most kind of you to be so generous with the medicine, señor. But *ajo!* we must not leave the bottle in the hands of Felipe. A peon, however good, is still a peon, with the brains of a peon and very little discretion. It would be like that one to force all the quinine upon her at one dose tonight, thinking thus to make her totally well by morning. Flora! Go, bring Felipe here *pronto!*"

A calm reply in the voice of the big Indian girl came from somewhere in here and a few seconds later we heard her calling from the rear. Felipe came at once. Meanwhile I sized up his master

again, thinking that perhaps, for all his kindly appearance, he meant to do as would many another in his place—keep that precious remedy for his own use. But the readiness of his man in handing over the bottle proved otherwise. In fact, the peon seemed to feel that the medicine was safer in Esteban's care than in his own.

"And now, señor, you will be my guest at supper, yes?" the master invited. "And hang your hammock here for the night—"

"*Gracias*, but in this part of the river I sleep aboard my boat," I declined.

"Wise," he agreed, with a shrewd smile, "but none will disturb your possessions at this place. Still, that is as you wish. At any rate we shall sup together—with a little drink first to sharpen the appetite, eh? Enter, señor!"

So we came in here, into this large room where you and I now rest, and had a drink and a smoke and a meal and some talk. It was passably well furnished for a place so far from any town, with a really decent table and some comfortable chairs and good brass candlesticks instead of the usual rum-bottles. The walls had a few pictures, too, the best of which was a crayon portrait of a young girl, maybe ten years old. Studying this for a few seconds, I thought the eyes looked much like Esteban's. But I said nothing about it at the time.

The girl Flora served a very good meal, then cleared the table and left us with our *cigarrillos* and the bottle. I had already given him the news from down the river, but neither of us had said much about ourselves. Now I glanced about the room again and remarked:

"You have a neat place here, *amigo*, and a much more comfortable home than I should have thought to find in this part. You have been here some time, I take it."

"*Sí*. Too long."

"Too long? How so?"

"Too long to leave it," he explained, seriously. "Often I think I should go back to Bolívar, where there is more safety and convenience; for I am not so strong and active as I used to be. But somehow I fear that in the city I should soon be unhappy and wish to return. Here one has space, but there one is hemmed about by walls."

"True," I agreed, without a smile. Bolívar is not much of a city—less than one-tenth the size of my own old home, Bogotá—but it certainly is huddled close. "So you are of Bolívar, eh? Long ago?"

"Not so long—yet too long," he repeated.

His soft eyes went to the portrait. Again I asked no question about it, thinking perhaps he had left the town because of a sorrow, and feeling unwilling to pry into it.

"When we are young," he said musingly, "we are like the birds and fly long distances. But when we grow older we become like the trees and take root. *No es verdad?*"

"True enough," says I. "Sometimes I think I am growing old in that way—even though I still travel much—for I have taken root in the Guahibo country, where I never thought to stay when first I went there."

"Yes?" He regarded me curiously. "Tell me about it, if you have no objection."

So I told him of my wandering from the great mountains down into the Vichada plains, of my decision to take up trading in the hammocks of the Indians and of my principal activities in the years since then; journeying about in the wild lands, living among the wild people, coming out now and then to sell my cargoes, and finding it all so pleasant that no other way of life appealed to me. He showed great interest, nodding eagerly at times, and seeming quite excited as I mentioned a few adventurous experiences. When I stopped he slapped a hand down on the table.

"*Cra!* A wonderful life, that!" he exclaimed. "Just such a life might I have led—*sí*, and even more wild, if it had not been for—"

There his eyes went again to the

picture. After a minute he finished, in a different tone—

"My daughter."

"Ah. Yes?" said I.

"Yes. She is at Bolívar, with the relatives of her mother. After the mother died I could not endure the town. So I came here to try my fortune with the cattle, and the years have passed and here I still stay. And—I have not seen her since that likeness was made, eight years ago."

He regarded the young face hungrily.

"That is a long time."

"Too long," he said again.

Then he poured a quick drink and downed it, scowling a bit. For a while after that he said nothing more, sitting there and unconsciously moving the cup about while he stared out of the window as if seeing things far off. I saw one or two things also, the clearest of which was his reason for wishing to live again at Bolívar—to be with his little girl, now grown to young womanhood. Except for her, the town held nothing to interest him now that he had "taken root" up here. The talk of safety and conveniences for his old age was only an excuse; he was reasonably safe here and more comfortable than he could be in Bolívar.

"Well," I suggested presently, "there are piraguas sailing past here to Bolívar every now and then, and the distance is only about a hundred leagues and a man might make a visit there and then return—"

"Ah, yes," he interrupted, "and on his return that man might find everything gone except his bare walls. Once that has happened, my friend, just so. Until my baby had reached ten years I went each year to see her. It means an absence of at least a month, more likely two. And in that last absence all the work of years was undone by a band of rebels who drove off the cattle and made my peons join them and looted my house as well. That taught me the lesson that a *rancho* without its master is a helpless thing, easily plundered. I do not make the same mistake twice."

"I see," said I. "But can you fight off any new raiders who come?"

"With the help of my friends along the river, yes, if need be. But there is little need, for there now is an understanding with the riders of the *sabana*—"

There he stopped, eying me cautiously.

"I see," I told him again.

His meaning was clear enough. The riverbank men and the plainsmen had a working agreement in handling the cattle and for their own interest the riders out there generally refrained from raids on the Row. At the same time, there was no surety against individual thievery, and every man had to take care of his own ground and whatever he had on it.

"So there is very little trouble if one attends to his business," Esteban finished. Then we were quiet again for a while.

Looking at the picture I thought it a little odd that he should have a daughter so young. Must have married rather late in life, I guessed. Afterward, making some inquiries in Bolívar, I learned that this was the case.

As a young fellow Esteban had been a rolling stone, gathering no moss, just drifting around and never getting anywhere. Finally he settled in Bolívar, where he took up a commission business and fared quite well, married a little lady much younger than he and became the father of a daughter. About three years later his *señora* died, his business went bad and he quit the place. But instead of going adrift again he came up here with a definite object—to make enough money from cattle to support the little girl. And he made it, too. If he got the cattle without paying for them, that's neither here nor there, he was only doing in Rome what the Romans did. By the time he had to stop visiting Bolívar he had put into the Banco de Venezuela money enough to keep the girl very comfortably for years to come, and after that he managed to send a good bit more by a man he could trust. I got that information from a friend of mine in the bank itself. Oh yes, a bank man will talk—if he knows you well enough and there are

drinks enough. So will any other man.

And that was why Esteban couldn't live a life as wild as he would have liked after his wife died. Just as well for him, perhaps. He wasn't quite of the caliber to do well among my Guahibos, for instance. There was a little too much gentleness in his nature for that. But he was a born adventurer just the same, and without the girl on his mind he'd have likely developed into a hell-bent revolutionist or something of the kind, just for the excitement. Even as it was he'd probably had considerable action up along here and back in the *sabana*, though he never mentioned it to me. He couldn't have lived here as long as he did and done as well as he did unless he'd carried a steel blade somewhere inside his velvet glove.

"*Pues*, the life that comes to us is the one we must live," said my host after a time. "You to your *Indios* and I to my cattle and other men to other matters. But tell me now, if it is not an impudent question, how do you fare for a woman in that wilderness? You surely do not live without one?"

"Oh, no!" says I. "I do as you yourself do. Only, perhaps, more so."

"Ah, *sí*, an Indian girl—or girls? You said 'more so'."

"Several of them," I acknowledged carelessly. "A man lives more comfortably with a wife than without, and if he is more comfortable with several than with one and nobody objects—then why not?"

"Precisely," he agreed. "And you take a new one whenever it suits you, no doubt?"

"Oh, no! I'm no hog," I denied. "The girls I took years ago are enough for me. They take good care of me and my *sitio* and that's all I require."

"Ah, but when you come down the river—" he suggested, with a sly grin. It was an invitation to boast of my conquests away from home, as many another trader would do. But he heard no tales from me.

"When I come down the river I attend to my business and nothing else," says I. "I know what I should do to any man who trespassed on my grounds, and if I were the trespasser I should expect the same treatment."

He eyed me searchingly, and then looked away, seeming rather pleased than otherwise. When he spoke again it was to open up the other subject most of the traders hereabouts love to brag about—my business, and more particularly my smartness in tricky dealing. But he got no stories on that topic either. There were none to tell. My little trading game has been built up by cheating nobody—a crazy idea, many men would say, but one that has worked well for me. This I made plain to Esteban, who smiled but said nothing. I began to feel that some thought or other had taken shape in his mind, some plan in which I was concerned, and that he was sounding me out to learn just what sort of chap I was and whether he could make use of me. True enough, he was. But it was months later when he put his thought into words and action.

We talked only a little more that evening, for I grew sleepy. So before long I gave him good night and went out and down to the ship. As I arose to go he asked:

"You will take *desayuno* with me in the morning, *amigo*?"

"No. I start at the first light and eat on board," I explained. "The morning wind is usually strong, and I make full use of it. I'll see you at another time."

"Do so," he urged me earnestly, "the next time you come down the river. When will that be?"

"Perhaps six months, perhaps a year."

"So long? Well, stop here, by all means, on your way down. I much wish to see you again—and I may request a favor of you."

"To carry something to your girl," I guessed. "I'll do that gladly, of course. Well then, till we meet again, good luck!"

"And to you the same, señor."

Then I went aboard, got into my hammock slung under the boom and slept. And before Esteban was awake in the morning I was gone.

THE next time I came down the Orinoco I met Diablo Caballo—both of him—man and beast. In truth, it was practically impossible to find one without the other; for the man, Diablo, never let the animal, Caballo, out of his sight. I mean that literally. Men said that whenever he dismounted he kept his face toward the stallion and watched him continously, even when the brute was roped hard and fast to a tree. He knew his fellow fiend was always on watch for a chance to kill him and it was second nature to him to guard against that chance. And yet—

But I am going a bit too fast.

When I left Zamuro, below the rapids, several piraguas of Funes men sailed at the same time mine did, bound for this same Row. They were coming down to load fresh beef—or rather, dried beef, since they wanted *carne seca* instead of the live animals and thus would not have to bother with bones and entrails. The order for this meat had been given some days previously, I heard, and now had come word that it was ready. So my little ship traveled that stretch as one of a flotilla instead of alone in the river as usual. And when I drew in at this port one of the Funes boats came with mine. The others went on to *ranchos* below this.

Esteban himself came to the shore as we tied up; and when he saw that I was I, not a Funes man, he seemed a bit disconcerted. Perhaps he preferred not to have me witness his trafficking with the bad eggs of Amazonas. But there was no help for it, and so he proceeded with the business. To me he extended a cordial invitation to make myself comfortable in his house. To the Funes chaps—a half-squad of ordinary roughs under a corporal—he gave short instructions to proceed to the rear of the place; but not until the corporal had shown the color of his money. The old fellow did no business on credit.

However, I didn't feel in the mood to sit in here idling if there was anything to see outside, so when the foragers went down the path and Esteban followed I just rambled along after him. He turned and gave me an odd look.

"If you're selling beef today, *amigo*, I could use some myself," says I, with a grin. "I haven't had any of late."

"*Bien*," he replied, slowing up. "If I can spare any and you can pay cash, you can have it." Then, as the Funes men went on out of earshot, he added quietly, "When these are gone you shall have plenty, without charge and better than theirs. I have kept the choicest meat for myself."

"*Gracias*," I acknowledged. "But I don't want to rob you of your private supply—"

"Don't worry about robberies," he interrupted, with a tiny smile. "I can always obtain what I need—from my own herd, of course."

"Of course." I nodded, holding my face straight. "Well, in that case—"

"And I am very glad to give it," he went on, "because I shall ask a favor in return."

"Anything within reason," I promised.

And we walked on to a sizable shed, open-sided but thick-roofed, where the meat lay. It had been cured to the point where further sunning would be harmful, so now it was kept inside on pole racks. The Pardo peons were on guard there, lounging around in an innocent way but holding machetes. Esteban gave them a wave of the hand as he approached and, sticking the long knives into the thatch, they went inside with the *soldados* to begin portaging the beef. We two and the corporal stopped just inside the shade of the roof. Pack baskets were loaded, weighed on a rough scale and carried toward the river, while the seller and the buyer recorded the weights on slips of paper.

It was a transaction as uninteresting as the selling of beans in a town shop and, after the first file of men had gone with their baskets, I stepped out again, meaning to stroll back to the shore. But I stopped. A few yards ahead, where a path ran through the trees to the *sabana*, suddenly appeared a horseman.

Mounted on a big bay, he was; a stiff-necked, high-headed, long-gaited bay that reared savagely as he reined in for a quick look toward us. As the beast rose his rider roweled him cruelly with long spurs, making him plunge violently, but holding his seat as if grown to the creature's backbone. He wasn't showing off, either; the action was automatic, and his whole attention was fixed on us, not on his animal. After a second or two he gave the brute free rein and came tearing at me as if to ride me down. The beast would have done it, too, if I hadn't stepped aside. Then, with a nasty yank at the heavy curb bit, the rider brought him to a halt and glowered at all of us.

A tall, powerful-looking devil, that fellow, and a hard one, armed for action. Carbine in a saddle-boot, silver-hafted poniard and pearl-handled revolver at his belt, *bandolero* of cartridges across his chest, he was ready to fight a whole gang single-handed. Ready and willing. Right now he was out for blood; and after one straight look at him I had sense enough not to make it my blood. I was unarmed, anyway, as I had left my rifle at the piragua, not expecting to find any use for it here. But I was a bit angered by the way this intruder had come at me, and when I have a protest to make it usually comes quick and hot, no matter how big the odds against me. This time, though, I swallowed it whole. So would you if you saw the hell-fire in those eyes.

Pale eyes, they were, pale gray or green, I'm not sure which, and downright ghastly in his brown-burned, black-bearded face. "Eyes of a cat," my Indians would have called them. Eyes of a killer, any man would know after one look. He would kill you or me or anybody else as quickly as a snake would strike, and for the same reason—just because he felt like it. Right now there seemed to be a green flame burning under his shaggy brows; and I would as soon have slapped a savage *tigre* across the mouth as said what had been on my tongue. The result would have been the same.

I heard Esteban suck in his breath. The Funes corporal, with a rifle in his hands, seemed not even to breathe. The stranger gave each of us one challenging stare and then opened on Esteban.

"Where is Pedro Ramirez?" he demanded, voice harsh as the scrape of steel.

"Ra-Ramirez?" stuttered Esteban. "Why— Is he not back at his *sitio*?"

"No, fool! You know he is not! Where are you hiding him, you slimy crocodile? Speak *pronto*!"

His teeth showed in a way that reminded me of a snarling jaguar. Esteban swallowed noisily. But he answered steadily enough.

"He is not here, upon my word, Diablo. He was here, yes, but when he saw the piraguas coming in—the Funes men are buying beef today, you see—when he saw them coming he started back toward his *sitio* to make ready for business. He went in his *curial*. I know nothing more about him."

The man Diablo watched him with a threatening scowl until the canoe was mentioned. Then he glanced toward the river and showed his teeth again in that tigerish way. Plainly the man he wanted had passed him by water while he hunted him by land.

"What has Pedro done, Diablo?" asked Esteban mildly. "Remember he has a sick wife, and—"

"She will be a sick widow this night," sneered the rider. "And you— If you have lied to me you can start digging your grave now, old one; you will need it before sunset!"

With that he was gone as suddenly as he had come. One second he was sitting there—the next he and his horse were shooting toward the path. They swerved sharply and vanished into the forest. And for long seconds after they had disappeared we three stood there without moving.

Then the first of the returning porters came into sight, plodding indolently along with empty basket up-ended over his head, and we looked at one another. Esteban was a trifle pale, and the corporal's face

glistened with sweat. Catching my eye, though, the Funes man moved with a swagger and began a bit of bluster.

"*Cra!* He went just in time for his own good, that mighty mouth-fighter!" says he. "Another minute and I would have take him off his high horse—"

"I doubt it," says I. "Who is your gentle friend, Esteban?"

"Diablo Caballo," he explained soberly. "Wildest of the wild ones out there—" he nodded toward the *sabana* —"and no mouth-fighter. Pedro Ramirez is a dead man."

"What for?" I asked. A rather foolish question, that, since Esteban himself did not know the answer.

"Something or other Diablo did not like," was all he could guess. "A bad one to vex, that Diablo. If either of you had even sniffed or spat while he was here your brains might be scattered on the ground at this minute."

"Bah!" growled the corporal. "Not mine!"

"Yes, yours," Esteban quietly corrected. "Before you could cock your rifle—*zam!* Just so it would be done. Seize a *tigre* by the tail if you like, or tie knots in a flash of lightning, but take no chances with that man."

The Funes fellow grunted sourly, but sneaked a glance over his shoulder.

"Is the Ramirez *sitio* far?" I asked.

"Perhaps a half mile down the river," the old man told me.

He turned his head, listening. The wind was strong from the north and ought to bring any loud noises to our ears. But we heard only the rustle of leaves.

The men came in and the weighing and packing were resumed, but the corporal and Esteban gave the work only half their attention, and I less than that. We were still listening. All at once we started and glanced at one another. Through the rushing noise of the leaves sounded three of four thumps like hard blows of a distant hammer.

"So goes Pedro," softly said Esteban. "God rest him!"

On the heels of his words came another thump, followed at once by two almost together. After that we heard only the sounds of the wind.

"*Ajo!*" muttered Esteban, looking troubled. "I wonder if—"

"If what?" I demanded, as he hesitated.

"If that one killed also Pedro's woman. It would not be unlike him, the merciless *demonio!*"

That made me scowl. After a second's thought I said—

"Lend me a horse and I will go and see."

"No, no, no! You had best stay here, Sixto—"

"If I can not ride I will walk," I threatened.

"*Sí*, and I too," promised the corporal. "I should much like to see that coxcomb again. Horses, Esteban!"

"*Bien.* As you wish," the old man grudgingly conceded. "Pancho, fetch horses—and go yourself to the Ramirez *sitio*, showing these *señores* the way."

As soon as the peon could saddle up we rode out and along the *sabana*, north. The corporal, for all his big talk, took care to hold his horse behind Pancho's and mine. As we galloped onward I looked for the twin *diablos* speeding away somewhere in the distance, but saw nothing of them. Soon our guide turned in at another path which led us to a small clearing and a house of palm, not so good as Esteban's solid home. At the piazza was a knot of men, all talking excitedly, who turned suddenly as we approached, three of them lifting rifles. Then, recognizing the peon and the Funes man, they let the guns sink.

"What is going on here?" the corporal bawled, very bold and aggressive now that no Diablo was there. "Answer me at once!"

They answered in a confused gabble of shouts, pointing down as they did so. Moving closer, we saw on the piazza floor two men—Ramirez, a stocky chap, shot four times, and a peon, shot twice; both dead. Out of the chorus of swearing and explaining we quickly got the story.

Diablo, bursting into the clearing, had

caught Ramirez in the open a little way from the house. Ramirez, after one look, tried to run. Diablo coolly shot him in a leg, downing him; shot an arm from under him as he tried to rise; then fired into his abdomen, and, last, into his face. That finished Pedro. Then, grinning but saying never a word, he backed away, watching the thunderstruck Funes men and Ramirez peons who, like those at Esteban's place, had been carrying meat. One peon snatched a rifle from a *soldado* and fired. Diablo promptly laid him dead. After that, with no haste, he continued backing off until he reached the trees.

"A devil he is, in truth," I said. "Deliberately shooting a man to pieces when one bullet would have done the work—that is the work of a fiend. But what was it all about? What had he against your *patrón?*"

The Ramirez peons—two of them—only shook their heads and were dumb. If they knew, they would not tell. Then the corporal jeered loudly at all of them.

"A brainless bunch of gutless slugs you are!" he mocked. "Seven of you stand here, five with guns, who did nothing! And that *guapo* did all his work with the revolver, I suppose? He did not draw the carbine, no? Then, you idiots, the weapon in his hand was empty as he went! All six bullets had been shot. And before he could aim the rifle you could have made him into a sieve!"

"*Cra*, that is the truth," grumbled one. "But nobody thought of it—"

"Ya, ha, ha!" laughed the corporal. "Of course not, you fools! Next week you might think of it, yes, a week too late. Ho-ho-ho! I wish I could have been here to think for you. Me, I would have cut his comb for him, I promise you! He would not have walked off so easily from me! *Por Dios*, no!"

The men scowled, but none contradicted him. As for me, I gave little attention to his ranting—I was looking down again at the dead. Then came a sudden gasping noise from all the men below me, a startled oath from the corporal and a drum of hoofs on the ground. My horse shied and threw me. I fell sprawling and lay a minute half stunned, but aware of what took place.

Diablo Caballo was back again. He must have been lurking there among the trees, waiting to see what the Ramirez and Funes men would do when they thought him gone. And he had heard the corporal's bluff and come to call it.

Before any of us fully realized what was going on, that hell-horse of his was streaking at the braggart. The corporal gulped and tried to yank his own horse about. The next second the stallion reared, slammed both fore feet down on the shoulder of the Pardo mount and knocked him to the ground screaming in terror. And as the weaker animal went down Diablo pounced like a hawk at his rider, seizing him by the belt and yanking him clear. The corporal's rifle flew one way, his sombrero another, and he himself went away in the clutch of his captor, slung across the withers like a sack of rice. He let out one hoarse howl, and that was the last noise we ever heard from him.

"Cut my comb, will you?" yelled Diablo as they rocketed back into the trees. "*Bueno!* Come now and cut it!"

Then the three of them were gone—without a shot from behind.

I got to my feet and, like everybody else, stood staring a minute. Then we all came to life. The Funes men, swearing, went after Diablo on the run, ready now for a fight. I followed on foot. My horse had run away, so had Pancho and his beast, and the one struck by the stallion was useless—crippled with a broken shoulder.

We found the corporal, but not Diablo. The fellow who had promised so loudly to cut that raider's comb was waiting for us at the edge of the *sabana*, and he had nothing more to say. It was his own comb that had been cut—from ear to ear.

His purse had been slit too, so to speak. That is, it had been lifted bodily, along with the revolver and knife he had failed to use. All the money that was to have paid for Esteban's beef, and everything

else worth taking, was gone. He lay there as worthless as a torn envelope.

I left him and his *compañeros* right there. The Funes men searched the woods all around, but I saw no sense in joining them. The fate of their corporal was nothing to me, nor that of Ramirez either; and I had seen enough of Diablo Caballo and his work for one day. So I washed my hands of it all and tramped back to this house.

Pardon? Ramirez's sick wife? Oh, Diablo hadn't touched her, but he killed her just the same. She died that night from the shock.

BY THE time I returned here most of the loading was done for Esteban had told the packers and porters nothing about Diablo or our reason for leaving, and so had kept them at work. As it happened, I came in just after they had gone again to the boat. So I had time to tell Esteban the news and then, at his request, to get out of sight until the job was completed. He wished to be rid of his visitors as soon as possible. When all was done I came out and told my tale, and there was considerable excitement.

"Now," says Esteban, "somebody must pay for this meat. Since your corporal has gone off and gotten himself killed and robbed, I shall wait for my pay—but only this once. Tell your commandant that unless the money is sent promptly he will find it very hard to buy more beef anywhere along here in future. *Comprende?*"

The Funes men hastily promised to deliver the message and shoved off, heading for the Ramirez place. The peons, finding that I knew nothing about Pancho, began predicting that he too would be found dead somewhere; but just then Pancho rode in, looking rather foolish, to admit that he had bolted into the woods and hidden there. After his master gave him a sharp dressing down for running away and making me walk the plain, we two—Esteban and I—came inside.

"A wicked *hombre*, that Diablo," said Esteban then. "The only man I have ever seen who had not a single friend. At one time or another I have known men who did many bad deeds and were hated by many people yet were liked by at least one human being. But that one—not even his horse, not even a dog, is his friend. The man is totally bad.

"I can believe that," I agreed. "But just who and what is he? A *revolucionario*, or one of a bandit gang, or—well, what?"

"Neither of those. He may have been both but, if so, no man here knows of it. He is too headstrong to take orders from any commander and too barbarous to command others; an Ishmael, a lone outcast from somewhere, his hand against every man. That is about all that is known of him here, except that his name is Cevallos, and—" Then he explained the nickname I've already told you about. "Where he lives, none knows," he went on. "He comes seldom to the river and is then unexpected and unwanted."

"It strikes me that he has already come once too often," says I. "Won't you chaps all have guns handy for his next visit?"

"Because of Pedro Ramirez? Yes and no, *amigo*. In such matters it is every man for himself. The avenging of Pedro falls to his relatives, if he has any. The rest of us attend only to guarding ourselves. And although we may keep a weapon at hand for that Diablo—*cra*, to attempt to use it would be only suicide! Unless, of course, one could catch him off his guard. And that can not be done."

"Well, that's your business, not mine," said I, with a shrug. "But now what can I do for you at Bolívar? It's time for me to move on.'"

Esteban grew silent for several minutes. He looked thoughtfully at the table, then up at the portrait of his daughter, then at the Indian girl Flora, who, for no evident reason, kept hanging about that doorway over yonder. Presently he opened a metal box holding some papers and took out a rather plump envelope, already sealed and addressed; looked at it a few seconds and then spoke out decisively.

"If you will undertake the mission, señor, I wish you to carry this letter to my daughter, placing it in her own hands," he announced.

"Certainly," I nodded. "Glad to do it."

"And, on your return, to bring her with you."

At that I nearly fell off the chair.

"What? *Válgame*, that is a horse of another color!" I objected. "My piragua is a bare cargo-boat—"

"So are all other piraguas," he interrupted. "Yours is as good as any, and for this errand it is better than most—because it is yours. I am satisfied that she can travel safely in your care—"

"Oh, of course she can. But still, how are you sure of it?"

He smiled shrewdly.

"I sized you up when you were here the other time," he reminded me. Then I recalled how he had sounded me out about women and tricky deals. "And since then I have made inquiries about you," he went on. "And I am very well satisfied with what men say of you. Otherwise, be sure, I should never do this thing."

"Well, I am highly honored and all that," says I, "but—"

"But wait," he broke in again. "Señor, surely this is not a great task for you to do—to bring a girl a few hundred miles on a journey which you must make in any case. And you will not have to wait upon her in any way; I have attended to that detail. This woman of mine will go now to Bolívar with you and on the return she will do everything for my Mariquita. All the provisions and other necessities for the voyage will be furnished by the relatives of my wife—that matter is provided for in this letter. And to you, for your courtesy, I am prepared to pay a handsome price—"

"Price be ——!" I growled. "There is no price. What I am thinking of is your girl's comfort and safety. A piragua is all well enough for me and my *Indios*—and your woman there, too—but for a girl who has always been sheltered it will be uncomfortable. And when she reaches here, do you consider this a safe place for her? That's not my business, maybe, but I'm thinking of it just the same."

At that he looked troubled and was silent again. Watching him, I could see that he had been wrestling with that and similar questions before then and was a bit uncertain even yet. And then I began to feel sorry for the lonely old fellow and to think I had spoken too quickly. After all, there seemed to be no particular reason why the girl shouldn't be safe enough up here. What was there to fear? Nothing tangible; just the chance that some shadowy harm might come.

"Nobody knows," Esteban said slowly, "what may come to any of us anywhere. I knew one Juan Aragua, in Bolívar, who never would go on a journey for fear of some evil accident; and one evening as he sat beside a window in his own home he was shot dead by a bullet fired in the street at another man. Perhaps if I had remained in Bolívar I too should have been dead along ago. *Quién sabe?* And perhaps if my Mariquita remains there—*Quién sabe?* I only know that I am lonely for her and this seems to me the best thing to do. I believe she will be safe here—"

"And so do I," I retracted. "I am so used to the dangers up above here that I forgot this was a different State. I'll bring her to you, and I'll take every care of her on the way."

He smiled again.

"I knew you would, señor. *Bueno!* Now let us be about it."

He gave the lingering Flora short directions to make ready and she went out, calm as ever. It was plain that they had already agreed on the plans.

"Now there is one more detail," said Esteban. "It is possible that my wife's people will oppose this request of mine. They never had much love for me. But Mariquita is my daughter, not theirs. I ask you again to put my letter into her own hands. If she, of her own will, then refuses to come to me, that is the end of it. But if she wishes to come and they would prevent her, that is another thing.

So here—" he took from the box another sealed envelope—"here is a formal statement which you can show to the proper authorities if necessary. Also there is an order on the Banco de Venezuela for money which will provide every convenience for her journey, if the relatives refuse to furnish it. I hope there will be no trouble, but one must be prepared."

"All right, old chap," I grinned. "Don't worry. A little trouble might only make it more interesting. I'll deliver your Mariquita here unless she doesn't care to come. And I think she'll come. Now about that beef we were speaking of—"

"It is already in your piragua," he told me. "I told my *muchachos* to load it as soon as the men of Funes were gone.

"*Gracias*. You are prompt. Then as soon as your woman is ready—"

"She is ready now." And, sure enough, there stood Flora with a flour-sack, full of travel necessities, on one shoulder.

"And now," concluded Esteban, reaching to a bottle, "to a safe voyage and a quick return!"

We drank standing. Then, with the Indian girl following, I walked to my piragua, got aboard and ordered anchor and sail up. My boys shoved off with long poles, the wind caught us, and we lay over on a tack downstream. I waved my sombrero once at Esteban, who flung up an arm in *adios*. After that I kept my face turned toward Bolívar.

ALTHOUGH I should much prefer to take no woman aboard my piragua, which is built for men only, I can't say that it's altogether undesirable to have one along if she's the right kind. And that strong, self-reliant Indian girl was that kind; good-natured, sensible and capable. Without asking or being asked, she calmly made herself the ship's cook, turning my regular *cocinero* into a mere chopper of wood and drawer of water. And there never were such meals on that little hooker before or since.

Before she had been aboard twenty-four hours all my crew were stanch friends of hers, and I myself was doubly glad she had come, foreseeing that she would not only take care of Mariquita but feed the rest of us throughout the voyage. On the second day I made shift to provide semi-private quarters for her, clearing out the little cubby below deck at the stern and arranging a curtain of sacking to screen it from the hold. This, I told her, would be the "cabin" of her young mistress on the return trip.

So we bowled along happily to Bolívar. There, instead of immediately taking Flora to the home of Pardo's daughter and delivering my message, I kept her aboard ship until my own business was completed—a matter of three or four days. My men always live on the piragua, anyway, during our stay in port, and I knew she would be as safe there as anywhere; none of the waterfront loafers would dare to molest her with my Guahibos on guard. And I wished to ask a few questions about Esteban and his wife's people—named Dorado—before making my call. It never does any harm to be sure of your ground before mixing into family matters.

So, when I was ready, I took that bank chap out for a fairly large evening and learned a few useful things. One of them was the fact that the name Dorado happened to be quite apt. Surnames are often misnomers, you know; people don't live up to them. But this word *dorado* means "gilded," and these Dorados considered themselves quite golden. They had just about money enough to live in comfort, but gave themselves airs. What was more to the point, they were assiduously encouraging a young fop, son of a wealthy merchant, to court Mariquita. About Mariquita my friend knew next to nothing, except that she was pretty; she was kept shut up most of the time, as the white girls are. But he had scant respect for her uncle and aunt and none at all for the fellow they had picked for her—a snob, he said, with an unhealthily large acquaintance with the women of the town.

After hearing that I was all the more willing to take the girl to her father. So

the next day, leaving Flora still aboard ship, I did myself the honor of calling at the house of Dorado. To the *moza* who came to the door I gave my name and the information that I bore a message for the Señorita Mariquita. She went back inside and I waited outside. A shutter creaked a little, and through a crack somebody inspected me from head to foot and up again. I always dress pretty well in town; so my appearance passed examination. After a while the servant returned and led me into the august presence of Señor and Señora Dorado.

They were just about what I expected—a pompous, paunchy man and a thin-faced, set-mouthed woman, both very formal. The reception room, too was characteristic; overfurnished, with much gilt and tinsel. Old Pardo's house, away up here in Rustlers' Row, showed better taste than theirs.

Would I sit? I would. Very hot, was it not? It was. With that they waited for me to deliver my message. I didn't.

"The Señorita Mariquita?" I suggested, glancing around.

"Ah—she is resting, señor," Dorado told me, with a fat-necked little bow. "You bring a message?"

"Yes. For the señorita," says I, looking him steadily in the eye.

"From whom?"

"Esteban Pardo."

The señora sniffed. The señor seemed to swell a trifle.

"I," says he, "will take your message, señor."

"I," says I, in exactly the same tone, "will deliver it to the señorita."

His chin came up, and he gave me a haughty stare. When he saw that it only made me smile he turned red. His wife sniffed again, very sharply this time.

"Mariquita is lying down—she has a headache—she is not to be disturbed," she rattled out all in one breath.

"That is unfortunate," I answered before she could say more. And I stood up as if to go. "I must call another time, then. The message is of importance to her, and—"

"Of what importance?" she snapped.

"Of great importance, perhaps."

"Is Esteban dead?"

"Dead? No, señora. Alive—and doing very well."

They looked quickly at each other, then hesitated. I took a step toward the door.

"A moment, señor," says Dorado. "You say Esteban is doing well—in a business way?"

"Precisely," says I. "But he grows a little old, and— Well, it may make a difference to his daughter's future if this message is not delivered now. And I am leaving the town very soon."

I took another step.

"A moment, señor, a moment!" he begged, hopping up to come after me. "Do not be in haste. Ah—be assured that the message can be entrusted to me—"

"You are not the person to whom it was directed," I refused, very blunt. "And now I have other matters to attend to."

"*Caramba*, so hasty a man I never saw!" he grumbled. "But wait. It may be that Mariquita now is feeling better. Anita *mía*, will you not go and see?"

After a rather spiteful look at me, she went. Very soon she was back again, bringing the girl of the crayon portrait—or, rather, a girl considerably older and far prettier, but with the same features and the Pardo eyes. The girl on Esteban's wall was a child; this was a young woman. Rather short, she was, but beautifully formed and creamy-skinned, with ripe red lips and— Oh well, I'm no good at describing women. Anyway, she was one of the prettiest little ladies I've ever seen and, what's more, not conscious of it. There was no head-hanging coyness or simpering coquetry about her. The look she gave me was straight and fearless and free from any affectation whatever. I liked her at once.

"Mariquita, little dove," gurgled Dorado, "this is the Señor Scott, who says he bears news from your father."

I bowed and, saying nothing, reached into my inner pocket for the two envelopes. It took a second or two to get

them out and see which of them was hers. While I was shuffling them she spoke out, quick and clear.

"Is my father well?"

She looked a bit anxious; and I liked her all the better. The years of living with that selfish couple hadn't made her forget her old dad. By the way the señora's thin lips tightened I could see that this feeling was displeasing to her.

"Very well, señorita," I assured her. "He sends a long letter—here it is—which he wished me to hand to you. And," I went on, improving a bit on the truth, "he wished you to read it carefully at once, in my presence, and give me an answer now."

Señora Dorado's mouth did tighten then, believe me. She had half lifted a hand as if to intercept the delivery and it was plain enough that she wanted to get the message away from the girl and read it first. But I stared straight at her and she sniffed again and stood fidgeting. Mariquita tore open the envelope and began reading. At the first words she smiled.

"What does he say, *cara mía?*" blurted Dorado, who had edged up close.

"Give her time to find out, man," I rebuked him. "Can't you see it is a long letter?"

He gave me an unpleasant glance and seemed about to tell me to keep my mouth shut, but thought better of it. Mariquita stepped away from all of us, going to the window, where the light was better—and where they couldn't spy from either side. I grinned, and stood tapping my knuckles with the other envelope. This bore Esteban's superscription, in bold lettering:

"Señor Sixto Scott
Confidential
For Emergency."

Dorado, peering sidewise, read this; and though he didn't know just what it signified he looked uneasy. None of us said a word until Mariquita finished reading. Then she turned, her face bright with excitement, crying out—

"Oh! Father wishes me to—"

"One moment, señorita," I cut her off before the others knew what was up. "Will you go?"

"Why not, señor?" she laughed. "Most certainly I will go to my father. How wonderful!"

"What!" yelped the Dorados together. And the señora dashed over and seized the letter, with her worthy husband about one second behind her. Mariquita made no protest; and now that she had spoken her mind I didn't care.

"*Bueno!*" said I. "Then I shall bring the woman Flora—your father wrote about her, I suppose—I'll bring her here to help you make ready. And as soon as everything is arranged we'll sail."

"How wonderful!" she repeated, looking forward, I suppose, to the long sail on the river and the freedom she'd never had in Bolívar. She was her daddy's girl, no question of that; the same spirit that had made him a rambler in his youth was alive in her now. But the Dorados had decidedly different ideas.

"Outrageous!" howled Dorado himself, as he got to the core of the letter. "A downright crime! What is the cursed fool thinking of! I will not permit it! Not one step shall you go, Mariquita, not one step!"

"The old beast!" his wife squalled. "Was it not enough for him to spoil the life of our poor dear Maria, who might have married much better, and then abandon little Mariquita and go to become a low river outcast, without trying now to drag her into the slime with him—make her the companion of *Indios*—disgrace her forever— And this after we have supported her all these years with never a peso from him— Mariquita, go to your room at once!"

I put my foot down right there, and put it down hard.

"Be still, both of you!" says I. "Mariquita, stay here. Now you, señor, have no voice in this matter. You are not Mariquita's father or legal guardian. And you, señora, are not telling the truth. Esteban is no outcast. And when you say he has done nothing for his daughter you

speak a lie. All these years he has furnished the money for her support. I know this and I can prove it."

At this the girl's eyes grew big and she looked at the Dorados in a way that showed this was news to her.

"And perhaps if I cared to do so I could prove that you have used some of that money on yourselves," says I, warming up a bit. "At any rate, I am fully prepared to take legal action—if necessary—which will make you people look very small in this town. Señor Pardo foresaw something of this sort and made ready for it, and now if you want trouble I can promise you plenty."

Dorado's eyes went again to the envelope in my hand and he looked a bit sick. His wife, though, spat at me like a furious cat.

"You sneaking river rat, you criminal from nowhere," she raved, "leave this house instantly and stay away or we will set the police on you!"

"All right, do it if you like," says I. "If you do I promise you that the dirty linen of your house will be flapping in the breeze tomorrow for all Bolívar to snicker at. I happen to be acquainted with the editor of *El Luchador*."

That hit her square between the eyes. She gasped like a fish out of water. Then up spoke Mariquita, head high and voice cool and firm.

"I am going to my father. Please let us have no more trouble about it."

She snatched the letter from the señora, who grabbed after it but missed. Then she held it behind her back, looking angrily and rather contemptuously at the older woman.

"This is mine," she added. "Take nothing more from me."

"Good for you!" I grinned. "Now, señor, you have just two choices. You can make trouble, and end by making yourself the laughing-stock of Bolívar. Or you can obey the will of Esteban Pardo and his daughter, furnish Mariquita with all comforts of her voyage and so save your face. The result will be the same in either case. Since Mariquita wishes to go, she will go. That's all there is to it."

There was a sickly silence. Then Señora Dorado wailed:

"But, Mariquita, you are disgracing yourself forever, going out on the river with this man! Think of Eugenio! He never will have you after this—"

"He never will have the chance, and never has had," the girl retorted. "I am glad to go away and be rid of him."

I chuckled at that, knowing this Eugenio to be the moneyed pup the elders had been trying to catch.

"That will be about the last word, I think," says I, "except your promise, señor, to provide all requirements for her journey."

He glowered at me. I tapped my knuckles again with the long envelope containing the emergency papers. The señora got her eye on this now and swallowed whatever else she had to say. And after a bit of grunting and growling Dorado surrendered.

"Our only thought has been for the happiness of Mariquita," he declared pompously. "And if it now will make her happier to visit her father I shall do everything possible to assist her."

"Excellent." I put my envelope away. "Then I shall bring the attendant here at once, and preparations can go forward."

Mariquita herself came to the door with me and opened it, though the *moza* was at hand to usher me out. As I passed through I stopped a minute, looked back at the sour faces of the Dorados, and then told her:

"No matter what any one may say against your father, señorita, he is a good man. And although you don't know anything about me, you may be sure he would never entrust you to my care if I were a scoundrel. So don't let any one prejudice you."

She laughed up at me.

"I know my father, señor," she said, "and I have no fear."

Then I went out, followed, of course, by the unspoken good wishes of Señor and Señora Dorado. If those wishes could

have taken effect, probably I should have dropped dead on the street.

I CAN say this for the Dorados—they were wise enough to make a virtue of necessity. When once they had made up their minds to the inevitable they didn't stint in providing the requisites for the journey. In fact, they overdid the thing, just as they overfurnished their house.

From the quantity of stuff they sent to the piragua you'd have thought Mariquita was departing for Europe; and a good big part of it was showy but useless. If I could have believed that this excessive zeal was due to affection I'd have given them credit for goodness of heart, anyway. But it wasn't kindness; it was ostentation. They were making a big show of their generosity—with Esteban's money, no doubt—both to draw my teeth and to exhibit to Bolívar their solicitude for the comfort of their "little dove." Nobody should say that the gilded Dorados hadn't done their gilded duty by the girl; not if they could plaster on enough gilt. So they spattered it all over the place.

In a quieter way, I did my part for Mariquita too. For one thing, I made my crew give the ship such a cleaning as she's never had since. Then I decided that she could stand a good painting and a new set of sails and, finally, that my boys deserved some fresh clothes. There was time for everything, because the Dorados were so busy showing off that it was more than a week before they had Mariquita's things in order. In fact, it might have been a month if I hadn't delivered an ultimatum.

So finally we got off, in the middle of a bright breezy morning, on a shining white ship manned by barefooted but spotlessly dressed Indians. The Dorados had hired a motor car to fetch Mariquita and their gilded selves to the waterside, and a small parade of their acquaintances had come for the send-off and of course a mob of loafers gathered to see the show and everything was gay and gaudy. Dorado was so swollen that he almost burst his buttons, and his señora was chattering volubly to those she considered important, and Mariquita was bubbling over with excitement. Down below her cubby had been transformed with cushions and ribbons and what-not into a perfect bower, and all her baggage lay at hand in the hold, making a brave pile which Dorado would have displayed to all if I hadn't kept him off the ship. The señorita herself, standing aft with big Flora holding a brilliant parasol over her, was a picture to hold nearly every eye. The only sour note in the whole assemblage was a slick fellow with rings loading his fingers and bad temper loading his face. He was Eugenio.

He and I knew each other by sight now, though we never had spoken, and because I was taking Mariquita away he liked me as well as the devil likes holy water. While the farewell jubilation was going on he stood there saying nothing, but sneering with every look. Finally, when we were all aboard and the plank was in and there was small chance of my getting hold of him, he came to the edge and put some of his malice into words.

"Phew!" says he, lifting a heavily ringed hand to his nose as if the boat stunk. "My word, what a filthy conveyance! Crawling with vermin too, no doubt. A craft fit for *Indios* alone! By my faith, if my father should ask me to travel in such miserable style and with such people— Faugh! Señor Dorado, did you provide your ungovernable niece with smelling salts?"

People around him grew very still. Mariquita reddened hotly with anger and mortification. I took one look, saw that I must jump into the water to get at him, and then hit back in another way.

"Ah, Eugenio, it is you?" says I, as if well acquainted with him. "Well met! I have a word of warning for you. On my way here I overheard two women of the town talking about a certain gay young dog. They said it was bad enough for him to be so cheap as to avoid paying his little obligations, but when he

also took their rings it was too much, and they would make trouble for him. Be on your guard!"

My voice carries well, you know. For a few seconds there was a dead silence. Eugenio stared as if petrified. Then one of the loafers let out a yell of laughter and it flashed through that crowd like fire along a train of powder. Even the children screeched. Eugenio yelled something back at me, gesticulating furiously and, as his rings glittered in the sun, the crowd laughed all the harder. After a minute of that he turned tail and went, almost at a run, and actually crying with rage.

And that, as I learned some time later, was about the end of the yapping of that pup in Bolívar. He was pretty generally disliked, anyway, by the men of the place, and before that day was out he couldn't walk a block without meeting chaps who looked at his hands and snickered. Then his father, who was a proud old dog, got the story and considerable more with it, investigated his associations, flayed him alive for bringing ridicule on the family name and ended by shipping him to Caracas with orders to remain there.

Within five minutes we were under way, the big new square sail bellying out in the stiff breeze and hauling us fast away from the town. Mariquita, staggering a bit from the wave-roll but steadied by Flora, still stood astern waving a tiny handkerchief back at the crowd. That crowd soon shrank to the size of ants, then broke up and straggled off. And after the girl had watched the city itself dwindle into a toy town on a small bump of earth she turned her face forward with eyes still shining.

"Now, señorita," says I, strolling aft, "you are Cleopatra sailing the Nile, and we all are your slaves. But if the head slave may make a suggestion, you will be acting wisely to drop below and change into simpler clothing. Out on the river we go in for comfort, not style. And besides, I should like to loosen this boom and break out the fore-and-aft sail."

She laughed at my talk of Cleopatra, but was slow to move.

"Oh, but I wish to stay where I can see everything, señor," she objected. "And down there I am shut in."

"You shall see all there is—which is little enough," I assured her. "When you come up there will be a chair forward, right up in the bow, where you can sit in the shade of the big sail and watch all ahead. But meanwhile—"

I motioned toward the ladder to her cuddy. And after one more long look all around she went down it, steadied again by Flora. By the time she came up again, wearing a sensible plain blue house-dress and a big shade-hat, we had set the other sail and I had changed into river clothes. Bolívar had disappeared behind the downstream bluffs, and except for an occasional riverside hut there was nothing but the wide waves, clay banks, shore trees and sky. We were settling into the monotony of the long haul to west and south.

But it seemed never to grow monotonous to Mariquita, for it all was new. A lone house, a tiny village, a couple of fishers out in a canoe, a turtle's head sticking above water, a pair of *carretero* ducks waddling along the shore, the *guacharaca* birds squawking on the *playas*, the dim blue mountains far to the south—everything was interesting to her. So were some things much nearer at hand—my Guahibos, for instance, and even I myself. Yes, almost too much so.

That was natural enough, I suppose. There we were, bowling along day after day, with the piragua almost running herself, and nothing for us two to do but talk. And she was eighteen, full of life, free for the first time from walls and watchfulness. And I was the only white man aboard, and not too old, and a big strong brute besides, and perhaps a somewhat romantic figure in her eyes because I lived where most men wouldn't dare and— Oh well, you understand. Anyway, after we were a few days out I woke up to a dreamy look in her eyes that might not be good for either of us. So in the course of a story of mine about the Guahibos I casually mentioned my Indian

wives; and after that she didn't look that way any more. 'Twas queer, too—I found it a bit of an effort to tell her that. But I was on my honor to her dad. And she'd have learned of it sooner or later anyway.

But that was no reason why she shouldn't still be interested in the way my Guahibos lived and the things we saw and did up in the Vichada country, and in the long reaches where there was nothing much to look at she asked many a question and listened to many a tale of mine. I drew them mild, of course, not wishing her to become afraid of my crew. And when she asked about her father's place and neighbors and so on, as she did from time to time, I took care to say nothing likely to cause any misgivings. It was a country place, I told her, and the people were good enough, though perhaps a little rough; and she would be quite all right there with her daddy. From the questions she asked it was plain that she had learned very little from Flora, who was a very silent sort of girl. For that matter, she considered Flora merely a servant sent to wait on her, and so spoke to her only when she required some little service or other. The fact that the Indian woman was a sort of stepmother never entered her head. And Flora, waiting on her by day and sleeping in a hammock just outside her cabin by night, carried on with unchanging calmness.

We stopped at only two towns on the way up—Caicara and Urbana, where I had an errand or two. I took Mariquita ashore with me to give her a chance to walk about and see what little was to be seen; and she just about paralyzed business. It's a rare occurrence for a real white woman to travel up that far, and a girl of Mariquita's looks—that just doesn't occur. It was laughable to see folks gape and goggle at her, and particularly to observe the sudden friendliness of men who had hardly ever spoken to me. They smirked and bowed and invented ridiculous excuses to intercept me and talk, all in the hope of learning who she was. Several made bold to ask me outright.

"The Señorita Fulana Zutana y Mengana," says I. That, as you maybe know, means just Miss So-and-So, and was one way of saying, "None of your —— business." Mariquita laughed, and they went away with silly grins or red faces, probably aching to blow my head off.

Yes, sir, I took good care of Esteban's little girl as long as she was under my wing. If, after she reached him, he was willing to let the world know where so pretty a señorita could be found—which I much doubted—that was his own affair. Until then everybody could choke to death with curiosity for all I cared.

And so we journeyed along, moving with less speed as the wind grew uncertain beyond Urbana, until even Mariquita tired of the trip and grew impatient to reach the new home. When at length we reached the Row and, in a tricky breeze, crawled slowly along it, she was so eager that the last mile or two seemed endless.

"Is this the place?" she kept asking, pointing toward each house that came into view. And when I'd say no, it was a little farther on, she would look at the water as if tempted to jump out and try to run on it. I myself had never thought that Row was so long.

It was just about midday when the suspense ended at this port. As we drew near and saw nobody waiting I felt a bit anxious for Esteban, wondering whether some misfortune had come to him—for we had been in sight for some little time. I soon learned, though, that we had been seen but not recognized because of the change in the ship's appearance—the paint and new sails, you know. When our identity became clear to a watching peon, out in the plantation, he called the news to all about, and then everybody appeared at once. Then, too, it struck both Mariquita and Esteban that other things besides the ship had changed.

"Oh! Is that my father?" the girl cried, in an odd tone. "That man so thin—and gray—and—and he is lame!"

"He is older, remember, Mariquita," said I. "And so are you."

Odd, isn't it, how you remember folks as they used to be and expect them to be just the same after years pass? She was looking for a heavier, stronger father, the Esteban of eight years ago. And his mind-picture was that of a little spindly girl, even though he knew well that she'd grown up. And now he stood squinting under his sombrero as if at a stranger. And neither of them said a word.

Even when she came ashore he stood there tongue-tied, looking as if he thought hinself dreaming. And she seemed timid.

"Señor Fulano Zutano, this is Señorita Fulana Mengana," I laughed.

At that bit of nonsense they both laughed too, and the queer silence between them was ended. He gave her a sudden hug and kiss and she cried a little, and they walked to the house. And I stayed where I was, watching the unloading of the baggage and giving them time to renew old acquaintance.

When everything had been put ashore by my boys and carried in by the peons I came up to give back to Esteban his "emergency" envelope, still sealed. Mariquita had gone to her new room to arrange things and Flora was at work making a meal, so we were alone for a time. I told him about my reception by the Dorados, but nothing about Eugenio or other matters which he could learn as well, or better, from his daughter and his Indian girl. Quite likely he had already asked both of them what sort of treatment I had given them on the trip. Anyway, now he quietly took the written statement from the envelope and then handed me the envelope itself, with the bank order still inside.

"For your kindness to me and mine, señor, there can be no payment," he said, with much feeling. "But if I could prevail on you to accept a small token of friendship—"

"*Gracias*," says I, dropping it on the table. "But I have no need of this, and you will please me much more by keeping it for Mariquita. What I do need is one more meal cooked by your Flora."

And that meal was all I would take from him. And a happy one it was for all three of us, though there was not much talk. Estaban had not yet recovered from the wonder of having such a daughter and his eyes went often to that crayon portrait which had kept him company so long, but which now seemed only a poor chromo of some young sister of the real Mariquita. The girl herself kept studying him in a shy, fond way. And I, making a foolish remark now and then to break the quiet and make them laugh, watched them both and felt glad for them and for myself, though a bit sorry for myself too—glad that I had done as I did, but somehow a little regretful that I must sail on alone. It's queer, the way some folks grow on you. You don't realize how much they are in your mind until you have to leave them.

But when the meal was over I didn't linger. I simply wished them good day and good fortune, took my sombrero, and walked out. Both came to the door with me, though, and Esteban himself walked down to the shore. There he stood a minute or two thinking deep. Seeing that he had something on his mind, I waited.

"You will stop here again, *amigo*, on your next voyage to Bolívar?" he asked.

"Oh, yes," I promised. "I shall wish to see you both again, and if there is any errand I can do— What is in your mind just now?"

He looked out across the river in a troubled way.

"I am not sure that I have done right," he confessed. "My little bud has become a flower far too dainty and beautiful for this rough place. She should be in the city, where the ways are more civilized and there are people of her own class—and better protection. I fear that life here, so far from her kind, will soon become wearisome to her and, perhaps, even dangerous. If some mischance should happen to me— But I will not think of that now. Still, it may be that

by the time you come again I shall decide to abandon this place and take her back to Bolívar and end my own days there."

"Well, that is for you to determine," said I. "If you decide to do that, I'll gladly give you a lift. But you don't have to wait for me, you know. There are other piraguas from time to time—"

"I know. But you will stop here?"

"Most certainly. Well, then, *adios*."

I went aboard. As the ship drew out into the river I looked back, finding father and daughter together in the doorway. Arm in arm they were, and a pretty picture they made there, standing side by side, loyal and happy and content.

Poor Mariquita! Poor Esteban!

MONTHS rolled along. Rather slow months they were, too, for me. Life was remarkably peaceful up in my country; so quiet that at times it became unbearably dull. In between my various excursions and hunts and so on I thought a good deal about some people and things outside, and in particular about Esteban and Mariquita—especially Mariquita. And the more I thought the less easy I felt.

Maybe it was because, on the way up here, I had grown rather accustomed to being her guardian, and so kept on carrying her in my mind; or perhaps it was because Esteban himself had shown a bit of apprehension over her position in case he should crumple up—a chance which somehow hadn't occurred to me until he mentioned it. Anyway, I now realized that it was altogether possible that she might be left suddenly alone here and have a tough time of it, and more than once I regretted having brought her up the river at all. It was rather late in the day for such worrisome ideas, and there was no apparent basis for them anyway. But still they would come to me in spite of myself. Then I would kick myself and say:

"Oh, forget it! As likely as not they've gone to Bolívar by this time, and right now they're safer than you are."

But I couldn't quite convince myself that Esteban would do that. I knew how hard it would be for him to desert his *rancho* for the cooped-up life of the town.

Well, at last it was collecting time again, and I cruised around to the Guahibo villages and picked up the crop of hammocks and headed for the Orinoco once more. On my way down through the Funes garrison towns I asked no questions about the Pardos, although I had intended to do so when I should reach Zamuro where the beef-buying boats sailed. On arrival at that port I found there a garrison entirely new to me and, at the moment, very ugly. There had just been some trouble among them and they were as bad-tempered as a hive of wasps. There's not much sense in asking news from men likely to answer only with a snarl. So I spoke only of my own business, and came on as soon as I could get clear of the place.

Everything looked the same here when I drew up to shore. A peon came loafing along down and stood watching us, but saying nothing. As I landed I asked him—

"How is the master?"

"Well, señor."

"Good. And the young mistress?"

He gave me a strange look, half surprized and half scowling, and no answer. Glancing toward the house, I saw nobody at the door. A little odd, this, since the peon had undoubtedly announced my approach. I scowled back at him and demanded sharply—

"Is anything wrong?"

"*Cra, sí!*" he grunted. "Have you not heard?"

"No. What?"

"The señorita is gone, señor. Stolen."

"What!" I yelled. "*Madre de Dios!* What do you mean?"

"Snatched away. Carried off. Gone."

He moved his head backward, toward the *sabana*. For a minute I stood dumb, unable to move. Then, staring westward again, I saw that now some one was in the doorway. It was Esteban; a silent, lifeless Esteban, standing there without

any sign of interest in me or anything else.

I walked to him, somehow feeling heavy and dull all over. And, reaching him, I stood dumb again, looking at him. The man had aged ten years; yes, twenty. His hair, gray before, was white. His face had fallen in. His eyes were sunken and dim. And his body leaned wearily against the side of the doorway as if he lacked vigor to stand alone. An old, old man was Esteban now, old and weak and worn out.

"*Dios mío!*" said I, finding my voice at last. "Is this thing true that this peon says? Mariquita is gone?"

His chin quivered as he slowly nodded.

"Lost," he answered, his voice hollow. "Lost. Come in."

Dragging his feet, he shambled in here and lowered himself into a chair beside a table; reached mechanically to a bottle, poured a drink into a cup standing there, and passed it to me. I put it down at a gulp. The rum was raw *caballo blanco*, nowhere near so good as the home-made but aged liquor he had given me previously; and the way he refilled his cup and sucked down the crude stuff afterward told its own tale. He was drinking hard these days, finding in the bottle his only anodyne for mental pain. The old Esteban, for instance, would never have offered me a used cup, or failed to apologize for the quality of such liquor, or drunk from the same cup after me. This Esteban was beyond caring about such civilities.

I said nothing; just looked up at the crayon still hanging on the wall and sat waiting. After a while he began to talk in an apathetic sort of way, stopping at times to stare at nothing or to drink again. And I, keeping quiet except to mutter a curse or two, took in the whole story.

For some time after the arrival of Mariquita everything was serenely happy here. Quiet though the place was, she found the new life enjoyable. This was her own real home, simple and sincere and free from the shams and schemes and struts and general hypocrisy of the Dorado house; and here she was a personage, not a pawn in a money-grasping game; lady of the manor, so to speak, even though the manor was rather small. She used to visit the huts of the peons who had families and talk to the women and fuss with the babies and in short order everybody on the place was her slave, from Flora down.

Besides this home visiting, the señorita used to make little trips now and then, with a trusty peon as bodyguard, to the places of the nearest neighbors on each side, who were companionable folks, though, naturally, not of her own class. They liked her immensely, treated her respectfully, and gave her the best hospitality they could offer. Sometimes, too, she took little rides in the *sabana* on a gentle horse of her father's; but not often, nor far, nor alone. Esteban had warned her, and probably the neighbors too had told her, that there were bad *hombres* out in that empty-looking waste and, though she never showed any fear of it she obeyed his orders to stick close to home.

Whenever any of those plainsmen came to the Pardo place—as some of them sometimes did, probably in connection with cattle deals—or whenever Funes men were seen on the river, Esteban took care to keep his girl out of sight. The coming of the riders from out yonder couldn't always be foreseen, as they're not in the habit of sending announcements of their vists; but it happened that those who did catch the *rancho* unawares never caught Mariquita out in the open. Once a couple of them arrived suddenly when she was in a peon's house. They never saw her, though, for she simply sat quietly inside the palm walls of the hut until they went.

But this incident, harmless though it was, disquieted Esteban considerably. In fact, he was always worrying over her safety and before this he had talked to her about returning to Bolívar, though probably in a half-hearted way that proved he dreaded the change. Now he brought up the subject a bit more vigorously, telling her that it was high time for both of them to go back to a safer place.

But she only laughed, asking him to name any actual danger that had threatened them or was about to threaten. And he had to admit that he knew of none. And there were no boats in this part of the river at that time, anyway, so there was no chance to leave. Besides, neither of them really wished to go, and the talk came to nothing.

So she lived on here unseen by any one but the people of the Row. But they all knew of her, as the word naturally went all along the line and from time to time different men of the settlement saw her as they came and went. And people will talk and some will tell all they know to anybody who will listen. So the Funes fellows heard of her, and some of those who came to this Pardo port made themselves a bit bold in trying to see her—though they never went so far as to enter the house. This wasn't Amazonas and they went slow on rough stuff. At the same time, they talked about her, both to Esteban—who gave them no satisfaction—and to others. And the others they met in the course of their deals were not all members of the Row. Some of those hard *hombres* from the *sabana* used to do business with them too.

One day when Mariquita was walking over to one of the palm houses to talk a while with the woman there, a peon happened to look toward a patch of bush at the edge of the woods and spy what seemed to be the half-hidden face of a man. The sun was in the peon's eyes, and the bush some distance off, and he couldn't be sure that he saw what he thought he saw. It didn't move. Then somebody else called him and distracted his attention a minute or two. When he looked back at the bush no face was there. To make sure, he walked over nearer to it; near enough to see that nobody was behind it. After that he attended to his work.

Mariquita passed on and entered an open-sided shed where the woman she wished to see was doing something or other. A hammock hung there, and she sat in it and talked. After a while she leaned forward and peered at one of the trees near-by.

"What is that behind that tree?" she asked. "See, a brown thing just a little way up the trunk. It just moved."

The woman looked, but, not knowing which tree was meant, saw nothing out of the ordinary. Before she found the right one the thing had moved again and was gone.

"It has disappeared," said Mariquita. "It drew back behind the tree."

"A monkey, on a vine," guessed the woman. And she called to the nearest man, telling him to get a gun and shoot the monkey for dinner.

He went for the gun, but when he hunted the monkey he found none. 'Twas just as well for him that he didn't hunt too far. If he had he probably would have died suddenly. That brownish thing behind the tree had been a felt sombrero; the man under it was the same one who had stood behind the bush and watched Mariquita, and now, having watched her again and reached a decision, he had withdrawn to unfasten his horse

Now Mariquita, as I think I told you before, hated killing and blood and even the sight of raw meat. So when the peon came with his gun she left the spot, walking hastily back to this house. But she didn't come in. Esteban was outside superintending some small job or other and she stopped beside him, told him about the monkey, and asked him to prevent the shooting. She hadn't forbidden it herself because she knew his orders were to shoot any monkey found near the place. The little beasts are great thieves, you know, and besides, he liked monkey-meat to eat. Now he just smiled at her and spoke of something else. And they stood there together, talking and watching the work, while the peon back in the woods was prowling back and forth and trying to locate that monkey somewhere up in the branches.

Then suddenly came a rush of hoofs. Mariquita and Esteban turned quickly toward the sound, the two peons working

at the job straightened up, and then all four stood paralyzed.

Diablo Caballo was back again.

Before anybody could move he was beside them—horse rearing high as he was pulled up short, man grinning diabolically down at the girl. As the fore hoofs of the *caballo* touched earth again Diablo swung low, seized Mariquita by the shoulders, and yanked her up before him. She screamed and struggled. He shoved her down hard across the withers of his breast, crushing the breath from her.

"You are a pig," he sneered down at Esteban, "to keep this girl to yourself. She needs a real man. *Adios*, worm!"

Esteban, empty-handed as he was, sprang at him. But Diablo had swung his horse a bit, and now, quick as a snake, the brute struck at Esteban, mouth open and teeth snapping. Esteban threw up an arm, and the animal bit it, yanking him off his feet; shook him about, threw him down, and jumped on him. All that saved the old man from death then and there was the fact that he rolled and scrambled as he struck the ground. The hoofs missed his body. But they struck his legs and broke both of them.

The next thing he realized was that the peons were carrying him in here. Diablo was gone. So was Mariquita.

"Drop me!" he gasped at them. "Take guns—horses—ride and kill him! Kill him! Save her! Out, you dogs—out!"

They obeyed. At least, they put him down, took his rifle, and went, while Flora put him to bed and splinted his legs. Every man on the place jumped on a horse and rode into the *sabana*. But Diablo Caballo and his prey had disappeared.

The peons, after some fruitless riding about, turned for help to the other men of the Row. They didn't have to ask twice. Men who wouldn't have lifted a hand to protect Esteban himself swore furiously and saddled up to hunt down the stealer of his girl. Gangs of them, armed to the teeth, rode the plains for days, going long distances. But they all failed.

In the course of this search they met some of the hard riders and hard shooters of the *sabana*, but got no help from them. If any of them knew where Diablo Caballo was likely to be found they didn't tell. Perhaps none of them knew, or perhaps they preferred not to go against his gun. Anyway, they would have nothing to do with the hunt. And when some of the riverbank men told them, straight and hot, that they were in for trouble if they protected that Diablo, they shrugged or sneered or retorted:

"You're loco. That Diablo is not one of us. We're not responsible for his doings. Go ahead and shoot him. We're willing. What he does to you and what you do to him are your own affairs. If you want trouble with us too, you can have it any time. Just bring it to us and we'll shoot it straight back at you. But don't try to mix us into this thing of Pardo's. We're out of it."

So there was no help for little Mariquita from those fellows. And after a few days the search was given up. The riverbank men had done what they could, and they had their own affairs to attend to. The Pardo peons were only peons, without a leader. And Esteban himself was crippled, unable to walk, much less to ride. He could only lie here week after week while his bones mended, and even when he could walk again he was too stiff to hold a saddle and too feeble to stay in it. The mental torment of those weeks, too, wore him out completely. And so now here he sat, day after day, broken and hopeless, with a bottle and a picture and memories, and nothing more.

ONCE more Esteban poured a drink and sucked it down. Already he had taken more than enough to fuddle some men; but the raw rum seemed only to steady him. I had another myself—my second—to help me swallow something that came into my throat as I looked at him.

"And nothing has been heard?" I asked.

"Nothing." He wagged his head mournfully. "There can be nothing to hear—nothing but beastly cruelty at the hands of that devil and death at the end. My only hope is that she was able to kill herself quickly in some way and so be out of it. The dead are beyond all harm."

I scowled into the cup, wondering whether little Mariquita, so soft and gentle, with aversion even to the shooting of a monkey, could ever nerve herself to suicide. It seemed unlikely. Yet one never knows what a woman, turned desperate, may do. I remember, too, the determination she had once shown in facing the Dorados. Perhaps in extremity, with that poniard of her captor within reach—

"Perhaps she has done even better than that, Esteban," I spoke a sudden thought. "Perhaps she was able to kill him instead of herself. You may yet hear that she is safe somewhere."

"Where?" he asked cheerlessly. "Where out there can a girl be safe—or even a man?"

"That I don't know," I admitted. "I don't know what is out there."

"*Sabana*. Swamps. Streams, crawling all about. Snakes. *Tigres*. Wild cattle. Wild *Indios*. Wild whites with hearts of stone. No civilization. No mercy. No decency. No help for one in distress. No hope, no hope!"

He said it in a droning tone, as if repeating something often said, or thought, before then. Day and night for weeks, no doubt, he had gone over every possibility, only to find each one hopeless. Whichever way his mind turned, it could find no escape for his girl but death.

"And there is no way of tracing that Diablo, no way of learning where he lives?" I asked.

"None. He is homeless, masterless, manless, godless, without a tie anywhere, a bloody hawk always on the wing. Some day he will come again to the river. Then—"

"You think he will dare to do that?"

"He will dare anything, when he wills to do a thing. He will come back if only to prove that he dares. And when he comes not one of these sloths will lift hand against him. Not one!"

The bitter contempt in his voice was worse than the most furious curse of some men. Plainly his grief had soured his mind against his neighbors. Natural enough, of course, though a little unjust; for, according to his own tale, they had done all they could to find his girl.

"I doubt that," said I. "Every man along this bank is his enemy now, and—"

"Bah!" he broke in. "Every man fears him. Every one of them will scuttle into his hole at sight of him. And he knows it. Spineless worms!"

Yes, he was bitter indeed. His voice had risen now, and for the first time since I arrived he was showing vigorous feeling instead of dull despair. It wasn't a point worth arguing over, so I didn't dispute him. As I sat looking at him there was a small sound at that door yonder. There stood Flora, who pursed her lips in a way clearly intended as a warning not to excite him. I nodded to her, sat quiet a minute longer, and then said:

"I feel like taking a walk, *amigo*, and thinking about this thing. Don't get up. I'll come back before long."

"*Bien*," he assented, his tone dull again.

And I walked out, to ramble aimlessly up and down outside and swear at everything, including myself. It was I who had brought Mariquita here, I who had forced the Dorados to send her here; yes, I who had encouraged Esteban to ask her here—though after some protest. And now I blamed myself for all I had done. And as I remembered the long, happy days on my piragua—man, I was miserable!

The more I walked and thought the less I felt like coming back here to Esteban. After a while I beckoned a peon who stood at a corner watching me.

"Saddle me your best horse," I ordered.

"You go riding, señor?" he asked.

"What do you suppose I do with a horse?" I snapped. "Do as I tell you!"

He turned toward the door, probably

intending to go and ask his master's permission; then turned away again and went to get the horse. Flora was in the doorway, and, though she said nothing, he felt that it was all right. I stepped down to the piragua and got my rifle. There was little chance of meeting the man I yearned to use it on, but I wanted it just for luck. When the peon brought the horse and saw the gun he brightened up and asked to come with me. But I growled at him and left him behind. I wanted no company.

Out into the *sabana* I went, heading west. It was a senseless sort of ride, for there was nothing to do out there except keep moving and wear out the mood I was in. To try to find trace of Mariquita, after the local men had failed and so much time had passed, would be only a fool's dream. I rode on, though, until I had seen something of the country and its emptiness—not a living thing anywhere, except a few wandering cattle—and then I turned back.

Nearing the river again, I decided to call on a few of Esteban's neighbors and learn for myself just how they felt on this matter. So I headed the horse at random toward the first *sitio* in sight and, finding its master at home, told him who I was and what was troubling me. And, after satisfying himself, by a look at the Pardo horse and another at me, that I was the man I said I was, he talked readily enough.

"That Diablo, he should be shot, señor," says he. "Or, still better, tied to a tree and killed more slowly, in ways which you who live among the *Indios* probably know quite well. But yet, what can one do? To catch him is impossible. We have tried that, at the time when he stole away Esteban's girl. And when he comes to this river it is like the coming of a thunderbolt; so sudden that one can do nothing about it. He is ready and we are not. And no one man, no, not six men could put him down. He has the quickness of a snake and the sagacity of the devil himself, no less. *Cra*, he knows what you will do before you do it!"

"Bosh!" I scoffed. "He is no more than any other man. The trouble with you fellows is that you're so timid you don't dare try to do anything."

"Easy enough for you to say," he retorted. "Face him yourself some time and you will sing a different tune."

And I, remembering the one time when I had faced that killer and held my tongue, had no answer for that.

"Ten or twelve men, armed and ready for him, might kill that one," he went on. "But unless they caught him in a trap at least half of them would be dead when he fell. And there is never time to set a trap."

"So you let him come as he pleases and do what he likes," says I, sarcastically. "He can shoot you down, he can carry off your women—"

"As for that," he interrupted, "there is no man here who will not fight to the death for his own. But there is no man here, except Esteban Pardo, who is fool enough to bring to this place such a girl as Mariquita Pardo. And a fool must pay for his folly here as elsewhere. And although we did our best for him and for her when the time came to pay, we now have done our best and we can do no more. What would you have?"

There was a lot of cold truth in that, too. And for a minute I had nothing more to say. Then a couple of thoughts came to me, and I spoke them as they came.

"Well, one thing you can do for yourselves, as well as Esteban, is this: If that Diablo comes again to the river, send word *pronto* all along the line and all get together and wipe him out. And as for Mariquita— Are any of you on good terms with any of the Indians out there?"

"*Sí*," he said. "Esteban himself, for one. He got his woman from a tribe out there, and some of them come to his place at times to beg for salt. Some others come to a few other *sitios* for the same reason. And at the time of turtle eggs many of them come to the river."

"Well, then there is a possibility that you might get some word of Mariquita

through them," I suggested. "Living among Indians myself, I know that any news that comes to them is usually spread far and wide among them. If any of you men see Indians you'd better tell them about Mariquita and ask what they know. Now that I think of it, some of them must have knowledge of Diablo Caballo. He has to get food somewhere."

"*Por Dios*, that is a wise thought!" he exclaimed. "And nobody has thought of it before, unless Esteban— Has he sent word to those *Indios* of his own acquaintance?"

"I don't know," says I. "But I'll see that he does. It seems to be the only chance of ever hearing the truth—though the truth may kill him when he has it. Well, *adios*."

And I rode away, intending to come straight back here and tell my idea to Esteban. But I didn't come as straight as I meant to, and when I did reach here I said nothing about my fine plan. It had become useless.

The little *sitio* where I had stopped was some distance from here, the sun was blazing hot in a clear sky, the horse and I were a little fagged from the *sabana* ride, and so I didn't hurry. On the other hand, I made no more visits; for as I rode along I thought over the attitude of the chap I'd just left, and decided that it was typical of the Row. When the abduction of Mariquita and crippling of Esteban were fresh in their minds they had been hot enough and brave enough to go on the war path; but now that the thing was old they had cooled and grown cautious again. And, as Esteban had said, they were afraid of Diablo and, being afraid, would be slow to do anything against him. So, unless they were so much afraid that fear itself drove them to adopt my suggestion and combine against him, he could come here again with impunity. The old man was about right, after all, though a bit harsh in his remarks about them.

Thinking along that line, I had nearly reached this Pardo place, when I took another look around and slowed up. Quite a way out on the *sabana* was a slowly moving group of figures that seemed to be either a few cattle, close bunched, or a number of men. Whichever they were, they traveled on foot. I know a horseman as far as I can see him, and usually a cow too. If those were men, walking out there where most men rode, the matter was queer enough to be worth looking into.

They had come from some trees, and were creeping along toward the river at a steady, dogged gait. Up in my own country I'd have said they were a party of Indians. Down here I wasn't sure. After watching them a couple of minutes I kicked the horse into a livelier pace. They were Indians, beyond question; a party of about a dozen, all men.

As they saw me coming they bunched together all the closer, and several long spears—tiger lances, ten or twelve feet in length—rose high over their heads. They weren't looking for trouble, but they wanted to let me know they were prepared for it. As I still came on they stopped, waiting warily. Three or four held bows and arrows ready, the shafts not notched to the cords but so held that they could be fitted and shot within a second. I gave them the peace sign of the Guahibos and halted, not too near.

"*Hola, muchachos!*" I called. "Where do you go?"

On hearing me call them "boys," a more friendly word than "*Indios*," they stood a bit more easily. But none answered.

"*Comprenden español?*" I demanded.

Then one grunted—

"*Sí.*"

"Well then, where do you go?"

"Pardo," answered the same one.

"Pardo? I am a friend of Pardo," said I. "What do you want of him?"

"*Sal.*"

"Salt? *Bien.* If you are known he may give it. Do you know his woman Flora?"

"*Sí.*"

"Good," I said. "Now let me tell you a thing about Pardo."

I walked the horse nearer, for easier speaking. As I did so two at the rear stooped, behind the rest, as if putting something down or picking something up, and rose again. I watched their heads and shoulders closely a second or two, a little suspicious of the move, but saw no weapon rising there. So I stopped a few yards away and talked again.

"Pardo had a girl," I explained, speaking slow and short. "A white girl. His own girl. A bad white from the *sabana* stole her away. That one is called Diablo Caballo. He is a *diablo.* His horse is another. They nearly killed Pardo. Now Pardo lives but is very sad because his girl is lost. To the men who bring news of her he will give much salt. Matches too, perhaps. Even a knife or two, if the news is good. Now have you heard of any white girl?"'

There was a quiet interval, but not silence. The one who spoke Spanish mumbled to the rest, probably repeating something of what I had said. Then several grunted together. I made nothing of their talk; it was not loud enough to be intelligible.

Then the spokesman said—

"We tell Pardo what we know."

"Oho! Then you know something? What?" I demanded.

"We tell Pardo."

His voice was stubborn, and it was clear that he wouldn't tell his news to me. Natural enough, too. He didn't know me, and he had no intention of giving me what Esteban would pay for.

"*Bien,*" said I, though a little vexed. "Come on quickly to Pardo."

"Tell him we come," he answered.

They stood waiting for me to ride off. I turned the horse, and in another second I'd have been speeding ahead of them. But just at that second the two at the rear stooped again. Watching them sidewise, I saw them rise like men lifting a burden. They were powerfully built chaps, able to carry a sizable weight a long distance. A sort of half-formed suspicion streaked through my head, and I kept the horse turning until he had wheeled clear around. And then, from back where those bearers stood, came a voice that made me kick the nag into a plunge toward them.

A weak voice, it was, babbling something that held no meaning for me. But it was no Indian voice. In half a dozen jumps I saw where it came from—a short stretcher, of poles and woven vines, hooded over by a frame of withes and big *platanilli* leaves. And just as I caught sight of it, out from under that hood came a hand, reaching aimlessly, moving in the nervous restlessness of sickness. And although it was browned by sun and swollen by insect bites, it was not dark enough nor large enough to be that of an Indian. It was the hand of a white woman.

"Mariquita!" I yelled.

Before anybody could stop me I jumped from the horse, shoved men aside, tore away a leaf or two, and looked inside the litter. And then I stood there as numb and dumb as when I first heard the news from the Pardo peon.

Mariquita had come back, and she was alive. Alive, yes. But that was about all.

THAT girl had been through hell.

Not just an ordinary hell of burning heat and torment by thousands of little stabbing fiends. That was the least of it. Her skin, blistered by sun and bitten by mosquitoes and *zancudos* and scratched by her own nails to relieve the maddening itch of bug poison, was torn all over, torn to the raw flesh. And she was thinned almost to a skeleton by hardship and hunger and sickness. But those were just external ravages that would right themselves with proper care. It was something else that had been worse to suffer, something else that had done the worst harm. And all of it together had not only wrecked her body but broken her mind.

Her reason was gone, all gone. The hollow eyes that looked up at me now held no recognition. Worse yet, they showed fear at sight of me; a mad fear that shocked me worse than the blow of a bullet. A second after she saw my

bearded face above her she burst into screams. God! Those screams!

I don't believe I ever was hurt worse by anything than by that terror in her eyes and face and voice—terror of me, Sixto Scott, who had done every kind thing I could for her. I tried to speak to her, but I couldn't. So I stepped back and then turned away from her, moving out of her sight. After a few seconds she became quiet—exhausted, perhaps, by her effort.

For a minute or two I was unable to say anything at all. The Indians watched me sharply, but said nothing and made no move. Although the girl's fear would naturally cast suspicion on me, my face probably told them that I wasn't the man to harm her. And when I spoke to the one who had talked before he answered without hesitation.

"'*Stá loco,*" said I. "She is mad. How did she come to you?"

"Men found her. She was alone. Off there." He moved his chin toward the point from which they had come, somewhat north of west. "Far off. We heard and went and took her from those men. We knew she was the girl of Pardo. We thought Pardo would give salt for her. We bring her."

"You knew her? How?"

"We saw her here once. We came to Pardo for salt four moons ago. This one was here then. She bought feathers from us."

Poor Mariquita, buying pretty feathers from wild men! Little did she know how she would meet them again.

"You say you took her from other men. Who were they? White men?"

"No."

"Indians, then. Where did they get her?"

"They found her on the plain."

"Wandering about?"

"*Sí.*"

"And what of that Diablo?"

"We know nothing about him."

And that was all he would tell me, and probably was all he knew. Whether Mariquita had managed to steal away from her captor and elude him thereafter, or whether he had abandoned her to wretched wanderings and a miserable death—an end far more cruel than by a knife thrust—there was no way of learning.

A fury seized me, and I tramped up and down cursing Diablo Caballo and vowing to kill him, while the Indians listened with cold grins. After a while I swore at them too.

"You fools, why didn't you tell me you had her here?" I demanded. "I told you I was a friend of Pardo."

"White men speak many lies," calmly answered the leader. "We know Pardo. We go to Pardo. Now you go with us."

I turned to remount my horse. But the beast was gone. He had run away home, perhaps encouraged by a sly spear-jab by one of the Indians. And my rifle, dropped when I saw what the litter held, now was in the hands of another Indian.

"You walk," said the spokesman. "You tell Pardo we want much salt."

"You shall have your salt," I growled. "*Vamos!*"

They began to move again, stepping a little faster than before, but not hurrying. The two carriers walked last, handling their light load easily but carefully. And I trudged along beside that load of theirs, saying nothing and staying out of sight of Mariquita, whose face was again hidden under the canopy of leaves.

As we moved she began to babble again; and as I listened I wished myself anywhere else, yet stayed there and kept on listening. Never mind what she said, *amigo.* You wouldn't sleep any better after hearing the things she told. They were things she could never have known or heard of or imagined before she came into the power of Diablo Caballo; things that made me cringe—and I'm fairly hard. There was no particular connection between them; just a lot of random ravings. But they told enough, more than enough.

Listening, I began to wish I could prepare Esteban for the shock. To have his girl suddenly return alive, when he hoped only to learn of her death, would be such

a marvel that it would almost floor him. But to have her arrive in that condition—

Then, looking ahead to the *rancho*, I saw two men riding out from the trees. They stopped, peered toward us, then came on the run. A couple of peons, they were, who, when my horse came in without me, had been ordered to investigate. One of them was on the same horse that had deserted me.

The Indians slowed up, but kept moving. I loped ahead, held up a hand, and brought the peons to a halt.

"*Cra*, what is this señor" asked one. "We thought some accident—"

"*Muchachos*, a miracle has come about," I cut him off. "The señorita comes home—alive—rescued by *Indios*. But she is sick. She has been too much in the sun and has a bad fever. She doesn't know any one—not even me. It is the fever, *comprende?* Now ride to the master and tell him what I say. Tell Flora to make ready. *Vaya!*"

Instead of starting at once they sat petrified, staring at the Indians. Probably the fools looked to see Mariquita walking among them, in spite of what they had just heard of her sickness. Then, as the Indians still advanced, they spied the litter behind—and, of course, crowded up to look into it. If I hadn't blocked them they would have torn off the leaves and set the girl to screaming again. But I slapped both horses back, gave their riders some sharp words, and once more ordered them away. This time, with the idea finally fixed in their thick heads, they went at the gallop.

The rest of us plodded straight on, and now I led; I had had enough of walking and listening at the rear. Before we reached the trees the whole Pardo establishment was at the end of the path to meet us—Esteban himself, and Flora, and every man and woman and child, standing at the edge of the *sabana* and waiting.

There, in the shade, the bearers laid their litter on the ground, the other Indians grouped at one side, and the Pardo people gathered at the other. Mariquita had quieted again. Esteban, leaning on a stick and shaking from head to foot, seemed half afraid to look inside the hood. It was Flora who stripped away the leaves and stooped to lift the girl. After one wild stare at her, Mariquita let herself be raised without resistance, docile as a tired baby.

"Here is your girl," said the Indian leader, cool as a lizard. "We want salt."

Nobody but me heard him. Every one stared at the pitiful, tattered form that had been their señorita. Esteban staggered, and I put out a hand to steady him.

"Fever, *amigo*, and exposure, that is all," I lied. "They will pass. Put her to bed at once."

"*Si, si,*" he whispered. "They will pass—they will pass."

Flora walked off, and Esteban hobbled after, and the rest trailed along, too much saddened by what they had seen to say a word. I stayed behind with the Indians. Now that Mariquita was in the hands of her own people it seemed only decent for me to drop out of sight for a while since I could do no more good and might, by scaring her again, do harm. So I squatted in the shade and smoked a *cigarillo*, which I needed badly. The Indians rested too, and the head man gave me back my gun. And there we all were when the peons and their people came back. Mariquita had been taken into the house, and Esteban had ordered them all away.

They were talking enough now; buzzing like a nest of hornets, mad clear through and aching for revenge. One woman, glaring at the Indians, began to scold them, saying they hadn't taken proper care of the señorita; and the peons glowered at them. It was true enough that the wild chaps had been rather crude and careless with her, but still they were a crude lot and, by building that litter and shielding her from the sun, they had done the best they knew. So I cut off that sort of talk *pronto*.

"Shut your mouths unless you have something decent to say," I snapped. "These *Indios* are better people than you are. They have saved the life of the señorita and brought her a long way, and all they ask is a few handfuls of salt. You are a bunch of empty bladders who never did anything and never will."

"*Cra*, if that fiend of a Diablo Caballo comes back here you will see whether we do anything!" snarled one.

"More wind of the empty bladder," I sneered.

But I looked at him a little carefully. He had a bad eye, that chap, the eye of a man whose hate lives long. If ever the right chance came he might strike hard for Mariquita yet. The others, though full of rage now, were blow-hot, blow-cold.

"At any rate, you needn't pick on these Indians," I went on. "They've earned their salt. As for that Diablo, I have a gun loaded for him myself, if you care to know it."

"Much good it will do," another man jeered, "at Bolívar or up the Vichada."

"Any more insolence and I will break it on your head," I promised, standing up. And the loose talk stopped right there.

I walked away, coming toward the river. All the Indians rose up and followed me, saying never a word. The peons stayed behind. They didn't like me any more.

Everything was quiet here at the house, and I went on to the piragua, the Indians still following. My Guahibos, faithfully sticking to the ship, were amazed when they saw my crowd, and more so when I told them to get out the salt-can. I had only a little salt of my own, just about enough to last out the trip; but I gave the wild boys half of that, about a pinch to each one, and they licked it up greedily. To them it was sweeter than honey; they were starved for it. There's no natural salt anywhere in this country, you know, except on the sea-coast, and a lot of the Indians down here will murder you for it if they can't get it from you in any other way.

"Have patience, and Pardo will give you plenty, if he has it," I told them. "We must not disturb him now."

So we all waited. After some time a peon came slouching down with the word that the master wanted me. And, once more followed by the Indians, I came back to this house and entered. The Indians stoppped outside, squatting around the door. In here I found Esteban sitting at the table, almost as I had left him. But he wasn't the same Esteban. The rum bottle was gone, and the limp despair was gone, and the man in the chair sat straight as a gun-barrel. His eyes, too, looked ominous as the muzzles of rifles.

"Once more, *amigo*, you bring my girl to me—" he began.

"Not I—the *Indios*," I corrected him. "I have done nothing but ride uselessly and meet those men by chance." And I told him all about that meeting and what came after, except that I kept to myself what I had overheard while walking beside Mariquita. "They want salt, and I promised them also matches and perhaps some knives," I went on. "They certainly deserve them."

"*Si*, and they shall have them and more too," he agreed. "I shall talk to them presently. Tell me, did Mariquita talk to you out there?"

"Not a word," I denied.

Which was true enough in one way. She hadn't talked to me, but to herself, and I didn't care to tell even her father what she had said. He would hear enough; probably had heard something already.

"How is she now?" I asked.

"Quiet. She seems to sleep."

"Excellent," said I. "A week or two of rest, and she will be herself again."

His mouth tightened, and I saw that he wasn't deceived any longer. But he made no answer. We sat quiet until the stillness grew uncomfortable. Then I stood up.

"Well, if there is anything I can do I am at your disposal," I offered. "If you

would like to take her to Bolívar—"

"No. That would do no good at this time," he refused. "The open river is no place for the sick, and Bolívar— I will ask you kindly to say nothing of this matter in Bolívar. It is the affair of Esteban Pardo, you comprehend, and I should prefer to have it remain unknown elsewhere."

I nodded, knowing well how the Dorados would talk if they knew of what had come about.

"If you will bring back such medicines as you think useful—and a supply of salt and soap and matches—I shall be very grateful," he said. "And I ask nothing else."

"*Bien.* But, if I may ask, what do you intend to do when Mariquita has improved? Stay here?"

"Stay here—and wait. There is a matter to be attended to."

"I see," I said, studying those hard eyes. "But bear in mind, *amigo*, that you can't handle a gun fast, and that if you die Mariquita will be altogether helpless. That matter you refer to will be attended to in time by some other man—most certainly it will. Indeed, I assure you I shall be glad to handle it myself if the chance comes. But you, Esteban, must care for Mariquita first, last, and always. Keep your head!"

"I will keep it, do not fear," was his reply, rather short.

And after another look at him, I put on my hat and walked out.

"The Indians are waiting," I remarked. "And I shall see you again soon. *Hasta la vista!*"

"*Vaya con Dios.*"

And although it now was late in the day, I boarded ship and ordered sail set. For once, I felt that I should only be in the way here, and that my room would be better than my company. And too, this place now held a great sadness for me and, as a fool will, I thought I might leave it behind me by going away.

But I couldn't run away from it. A man never can. I don't believe I smiled once between here and Bolívar.

THAT little ship made the fastest trip in her history that time. Luck was in my favor and I made the most of it. The wind held unusually steady and on the way back the moon was big and bright in a remarkably clear sky, giving me a chance to sail more than half the night as well as all day. Ordinarily I would let most of that moonlight go to waste, for I'm not fond of night travel on this treacherous old river. But this time, with Esteban waiting here for medicines, I took every mile I could get. And I was back at this *sitio* in just three weeks.

To make such a record as that, of course, meant speeding up everything else as well as the boat. I rushed my business at Bolívar, refused all requests to deliver anything at the towns in between, cut my usual holiday absolutely out, and never went ashore once on the way. On the other hand, I took time to visit the best doctor in Bolívar and, without giving any names, describe the case to him as well as I could and ask him for all medicines he thought advisable. He put up those drugs with his own hands, instead of sending me to an ordinary *droguero*, and wrote out all instructions in unmistakable form. And I guarded them more carefully than gold.

Avoiding the Dorados was easy enough, because they waited for me to call on them instead of condescending to send any inquiry to me, and by the time they realized that they were being ignored I was gone. But I had to lie to some other folks who remembered Mariquita's gay departure and now asked about her. I told those questioners that I hadn't called here on my way down, so hadn't seen her, but that I had heard Esteban was well, so naturally things must be all right with her. That was all they got from me.

With all essentials attended to, I hoisted sail and blew out. And, as I've said, I reached this place just three weeks after leaving. In the ordinary course of events three weeks would bring very little change in affairs here and, with Mariquita always in my mind, the most important development I looked for was either

improvement in her condition or death. To Diablo Caballo and Esteban I gave little thought; there would be time enough to think of them when I arrived here. But people don't always wait for you to think of them. And words you have left behind you may bring about results you never thought of. A man never knows, when he spills his ideas where they can be heard, how far they will travel after that or what actions they will start.

Now, for instance, I had told one man on this Row that if Diablo Caballo ever came back it would be a good idea to send word along the line and make ready for him. And out on the *sabana* I had sworn to kill that devil myself—in the hearing of Indians who would go back home and tell the tale to other Indians, who would tell it to still others, and so on. And about the last words I had spoken to Esteban were a warning against trying any gun work. And this is what came about in the three weeks I was gone and on the day I returned:

First, Esteban ordered his men to catch a young calf, bring it in, and keep it in a little tiger-proof corral down at the place of barbecue, behind here, until he should decide to kill it.

Second, thanks to rest and quiet and faithful nursing by big Flora, Mariquita showed some improvement physically, but not much mentally. Her skin healed, and she recovered strength enough to sit up now and then, though not for long. But her mind wandered continually, and she knew little of what went on around her

Third, Diablo Caballo came back.

He came on the very day when I came, and so near the time of my own arrival that I don't believe it was just coincidence. Although nobody could logically expect me back here so soon, my piragua could be seen on the river by anybody watching for it. I came from the north, and he came from the north, riding right down the Row ahead of me. No, I don't think it was mere chance.

But this time, unlike most times, his coming became known ahead of him. That was partly his own fault. When Esteban predicted to me that he would come back to prove that he dared to come back, the old man spoke a prophecy. Now that he was back, the fellow showed himself at every *sitio* north of here, riding in suddenly, facing all the men he found there, sneering at the lot of them, jumping his infernal horse at a peon or two and knocking them over—he trampled one chap pretty badly—and then going on to the next place. And not a man dared try conclusions with him. But one of them, picking a fast horse and riding the forest paths, got ahead of him and gave out the word on the wing. So the news came to Esteban.

The minute that warning reached this house things began to move. Esteban called his people together on the run. Flora picked Mariquita up in her arms and carried her into the trees south of here, where she hid herself with Indian skill. The other women and the children took refuge somewhere else. The peons ran to the calf-corral, butchered the little beast, and began to roast it over the *barbacoa*. Esteban himself followed them and stood there leaning on his stick. He had no gun, nor any other weapon.

And so Diablo Caballo found them: a feeble old man, defenseless, standing at the breezy side of the fireplace, and a couple of unarmed peons tending the turning of the spit. Nobody else was in sight. Coming from the north and riding the *sabana*, as he did, he could first spy the smoke and then look in at the open end of the hole in the woods to see what made it. That's just what he did. And, finding Esteban there, he rode right in and up to him.

Esteban, looking up suddenly, stood a second as if paralyzed by fear. So did the two peons. Then the old man shrank back with one arm half raised before him, the very picture of abject terror. And Diablo laughed; laughed loud, sneering and contemptuous and cruelly amused.

"*Cra*—Diablo Caballo—it is you!" Esteban gasped.

"*Sí*, it is I, you crook-shanked old

lizard," Diablo mocked him. "Are you glad to see me again?"

"Glad? *Dios mío!* After what you have done to me you ask that?" cried Esteban. "Why must you come here again? Can you not leave me in peace? Go away, Diablo, I beg of you!"

Diablo laughed louder than before, and set about tormenting him.

"But no, not yet," says he. "I call this a scurvy welcome to a guest, Pardo, and a most miserable way to treat your own son-in-law—in a manner of speaking. Consider how kind I have been to you in the past, taking that worthless, ignorant girl of yours off your hands and giving her an education—yes, and even allowing you to roll around under the feet of this horse of mine. And now, *por Dios*, you show me no gratitude whatever! And I hear that you have gotten that faithless woman-animal of yours—and mine—back here again and encouraged her to think ill of me. That is shabby treatment, Pardo, and I have half a mind to slit you up the belly for it. But perhaps I can persuade her to ride out with me again—after I have attended to another matter here—and convince her that she had best stay with me. What do you say to that?"

Esteban could say nothing for a few seconds. Then, getting a grip on himself, he answered:

"You will see her no more. She came back to me mad—mad and almost dead. And I have had to send her away."

"Where?" demanded Diablo, scowling.

"To Urbana, if you must know," the old man lied. "Only yesterday she went, with four of my peons to paddle and my woman to care for her. Look in my house if you think I lie. It is empty. These two *muchachos* and I are all that remain."

Diablo glanced once at the wooden-faced peons and then scowled again at Esteban. Esteban took a step aside, toward the *barbacoa*. Then, hesitating, he said:

"But now—well, what is done is done and can not be changed. And I am an old man with not long to live, and I ask you to leave me in peace. Let us have no more trouble, Diablo. Tie that infernal *caballo* of yours to a tree—I have fear of him—and eat some of this tender veal with me, and then go your way. You can find better amusement at some other *sitio*."

It was a proposal to tickle the humor of the Devil himself—to eat with the man he had so deeply wronged, to be served by the man who ought to kill him. And the smell of the broiling meat was tempting. He glanced around. And Esteban said:

"There is a halter on that tree yonder, ready for the tying. It is a hitching place for my own horses. *Muchachos*, turn the meat!"

Diablo took a glance at the sun and another toward the river trees, as if timing something—me, probably. Then he forced his stallion over to the tree, tied the halter tight enough to half-strangle the beast—pure meanness, that—and dismounted. While he was doing this, Esteban moved over into the shade of that patch of tall bush—remember it?—where was the most comfortable spot to stand. Diablo, moved by more meanness, swaggered straight over to that same shade and shoved the old man out of it, taking the place for himself.

"Get back into the sun, lizard!" he jeered, fingering his poniard. Esteban hobbled farther out and began nervously berating the two peons.

"Hasten, *muchachos!*" he chattered. "Is not the meat done on that side? You held it still so long—some of it must be cooked—try that flank with the knife. Not quite? Well build up the fire—hurry it along. And see that you cut for El Señor Diablo the best piece. A moment, Diablo, and it will be ready."

Diablo waited that moment, and several more, keeping an eye on the three men and on his horse. That horse was fighting the rope, doing his best to break it, and his master watched him with a grin. In the meantime Esteban kept scolding the peons. Also in the meantime, unknown to any of them, I had come ashore and was on my way to that spot.

No, I hadn't sailed into the Pardo port. As I drew near this place I steered fairly well inshore, and the men at the *sitio* just north of this had recognized my outfit. There were only three of them, and they hadn't quite enough nerve to go on the war path against Diablo, but one of them had a few brains in his head. He grabbed a white rag, ran to the edge, and signaled frantically with it. And I, guessing that the excitement had some connection with the Pardos, ran the piragua over near him and asked what was up.

"Diablo Caballo is back, and he has gone to the Pardo *rancho* just now," says he. "And if you sail into that port—"

"Enough said," says I. "*Gracias, amigo.* Is there a path through the woods yonder? There is? Good! And will you show it to me? Good again. One minute."

I grabbed up my gun, made sure it was fully loaded, and jumped ashore before the ship had fairly stopped; told my Guahibos to stay there—much to their disgust—and turned to the chap who had warned me.

"Now show me the start of that path," I requested, "and I'll ask nothing more of you."

He wasted no time or words. We ran together to the beginning of the 'longshore path. And says he:

"Straight ahead. There are no branch paths. This leads to a *barbacoa* of Esteban's, and from there another path runs to the house. You can not miss the way. *Vaya con Dios!*"

He had no idea that anything was going on at that *barbacoa*, but he took no chance of endangering himself by going with me. I left him right there, glad to go alone. I can travel quietly in spite of my bulk and when there's something serious in the wind I don't want a stranger with me to make noises and hamper my movements. Now I went along that little path at a good round gait, but not so fast as to create any disturbance. Although I didn't suspect that Diablo was at the place of barbecue, I had no means of knowing just where he was, and it was no part of my game to go blundering full tilt into a bullet. So when the woods thinned I stepped very softly and watched ahead. It was just that caution that saved me from upsetting the whole thing.

Diablo Caballo, with hands still near his weapons, watched Esteban, peons, and horse. Esteban slyly watched Diablo, and the peons watched the meat. Seeing Diablo grow restless and begin to look around him, Esteban called:

"Now it is ready—now it must be ready—we shall try it and see. Pancho, cut off a slice there! Two slices! *Ajo*, it is hot! But I can carry it. Turn the pole again, *muchachos*, while we try this. Now, Diablo—"

He limped over with two slices, one big and one small. Diablo seized the large one, lifted it in both hands, and bit into it. Esteban tasted the other.

"*Ah, cra, no hay sal,*" said he. "There is no salt on it. We must have some."

He stepped away again, gestured to the peons as if angered by their neglect to salt the meat before handing it to him, and yelled the very words you used a while ago:

"*Sal, muchachos, sal! Pronto!*"

The salt came—*pronto*. Out of that bush behind Diablo Caballo sprang four men, two on each side of him. And though he dropped that meat and snatched at revolver and dagger in less than a second, he was just a shade too slow. Maybe his greasy hands slipped on the smooth hilts of silver and pearl, or maybe those hands had started too late. Anyway, two machetes chopped him on each arm—machetes swung with the speed and strength and hate of vindictive Pardo peons. And those arms became useless instantly.

They were not entirely cut away, but they might as well have been. They flopped down at his sides and hung there limp as rags. The machetes swung back for another stroke, aimed now at the neck; but only one of them came forward. Esteban yelled, "Stop!" And three out of the four blades did stop. The fourth was already hissing forward—it was in the

hands of that hard-eyed peon I had noticed when Mariquita came home—swinging so fast that he couldn't halt it. But he did turn it, and it hit Diablo flatwise across the mouth. Diablo fell over backward as if shot.

That peon jumped on him then, took his gun and knife off him and spat in his face. He would have done plenty more, too, but Esteban was at him now, beating him with his stick and, mad as he was, the fellow obeyed his master. By that time I was there to help if needed, but there was nothing for me to do. Nobody gave the least attention to me. And in what followed I took no hand and spoke no word.

Diablo, snarling like a wounded *tigre*, writhed about and twisted himself up first to his knees and then to his feet. Those pale eyes of his were glaring horribly and the curses that came gasping through his blood-stained lips were frightful to hear. For the moment he was too insane with rage to feel anything else. He comprehended the whole trick now—too late. And the thing that maddened him most was not that he was caught, nor that he was unable to use his weapons, but that the old man made an absolute fool of him, baiting a trap with a piece of meat and springing it with one word—one little word of three letters.

That word *sal*, you know, has different meanings. As a noun it's just "salt." As a verb, imperative, it means "assault." So when Esteban, after planting in his mind the thought of salt, gave that call to the peons, he was really commanding his hidden men to jump out and attack. 'Twas like a false trail laid down by an Indian to lead an enemy into an ambush—perfectly plain, yet deceptive and deadly. And Diablo, for all his reputed cunning, had walked right into the trap, heard it click, and stood flatfooted while it snapped shut. No wonder he raved!

NOW Esteban took command; command of Diablo and everything else. That old man was no longer a weakling. He was an Esteban I'd never seen before, nor Diablo, nor any one else, perhaps. The kindly fellow I'd first known, the rum-soaked wreck I'd found later, the trembling cripple who had met Mariquita at the *sabana* edge, the terrified coward who had just shivered and shambled before a heartless tyrant, all these were gone. On the other hand, he showed none of the savagery of the peons nor the violent rage of Diablo himself, though he had every reason to. He was steel; cold, hard, gray steel, grim and deadly as the captured weapons he now held—the gun that had shot Pedro Ramirez to death and the blade that had slit the throat of the Funes corporal.

"Bind up his arms!" he commanded.

We all stared; even Diablo himself. Nobody moved.

"Bind them!" snapped Esteban. "He bleeds too fast."

At that the peons grinned suddenly and obeyed. Near-by lay a short rope, previously used to halter the calf, and this they knotted tight around Diablo's arms, stopping the swift flow from his arteries. When this was done Esteban spoke to Diablo, his voice unhurried, unchanging, and unemotional as the steady chop of an ax destroying a poisonous tree.

"Cevallos," he said, using the man's real name, "you have reached your end. I shall waste few words on you. You know what you have done to me and to others. You know what you deserve. You know I should be justified in cutting you to pieces, bit by bit, or in putting you on that fire and roasting you like that calf. But I am not a savage, not a *diablo* like you, to find satisfaction in torture. And there is a punishment more fit for you than those crude measures. I am going to punish not only the thing that you are but the thing that made you what you are."

Diablo stood silent now, growing a bit pale. The old man's cold rigor was taking effect on him.

"Consider, Cevallos," continued Esteban. "Consider that *caballo* of yours. He is a devil, ridden by a devil. And you also are ridden by a devil—the devil of

pride, the devil of conceit. You have made that devil your god. You have paid that devil tribute of blood and agony and crime. You have gloried in your wickedness and cruelty because they made men fear you, because that fear flattered your infernal vanity. You have been proud even of that name Diablo. You would be El Diablo himself, bringing a hell to those weaker than you. If a man belittled you he died, as Pedro Ramirez died, cruelly shot to death. I have lately learned why you did that thing to Pedro—because he said you were a filthy dog. In some way you heard of that saying and it enraged your conceit, and you shot him and another and caused the death of his woman, all for two contemptuous words. Pride, evil pride has been your demon and made you what you are—a bold desperado to yourself, an abomination to all others, so abominable that no man—not even a beast—would be your friend.

"*Bien.* Now see what it has brought you. You, who thought yourself so crafty and quick and sagacious that none could conquer you, are outwitted by an unarmed old man whom you once trampled in the dirt. You are overpowered not by dangerous outlaws nor by shooting soldiers, but by common peons, men you hold in utmost contempt. Yes, and you are spat upon by them, like the low thing you are. And this is the tale that will live longest after you—that you, Diablo Caballo, went to your death with your face spattered with the spit of peons."

At that Diablo writhed furiously and tried to wipe his face on his shoulders.

"And this is the end of you," Esteban went on, never pausing. "This is the end for which I have saved you from beheading by these machetes. Consider again your *caballo*, which you have tortured times without number. You know what he will do to you in return when once he has you in his power. And it is that beast, not any man, that shall finish you. You shall not have even the honor of being executed like a criminal. You shall die as an animal, slain by an animal."

He stopped, and stood looking straight into the prisoner's face. And that face turned ghastly yellow under the brown of the sun. It twisted with fear, and the pale eyes bulged as they stared at that furious horse, still fighting the rope.

"*Cra*, no!" gasped Diablo. "Not that! Shoot me—stab me—cut off my head—but do not give me to that fiend!"

"If he is a fiend, you have made him so," coldly replied Esteban. "And you shall master him again—if you can. I do not wish him to kill you here; I do not wish my ground to be further befouled by you. My men shall put you once more on his back and cut his rope—and yours also—and drive him out into the *sabana*. And out there you and he shall see who is master at the end. You can put off that end just so long as your pride and your will and your strength can hold you on his back. You will bleed steadily, and at the last you will fall. Then he will have you. There is no escape for you. Even if you meet other men out there none will help you. You have destroyed friendship with all men, and so have destroyed yourself. Now you shall go."

"No, no, *por amor de Dios*, no!" yelled Diablo, trying to back away, only to be kicked forward by a peon. "Not that way! Have mercy enough to end it quickly—"

"What mercy did you show my girl, you reptile?" snapped Esteban, suddenly hot. "Weeks upon weeks of misery—*Muchachos!* Put him on that beast before I forget myself and kill him! Away with him!"

The peons grabbed Diablo. He kicked at them, bit at them, wrenched and squirmed and plunged from side to side. But it did him no good. They yanked him off his feet, carried him to the horse. And there, before they threw him up on the stallion's back, they held him where that brute could look at him and comprehend his condition. The animal understood well enough. His eyes blazed, and he snapped at his master, then reared and struck at him, but failed to reach him. Then the men, dodging flying hoofs,

heaved Diablo up into the saddle and held him there.

Two cut the rope binding his arms. Another cut away the bridle. A fourth severed the halter choking the mad horse. Then all sprang clear. The horse was free.

"*Adios!*" called Esteban.

Diablo made no answer. He was too desperately occupied with holding his seat. The beast leaped into the air, shook himself, whirled and snapped, and went plunging all about. Diablo still clung, legs gripping hard, body rocking in the saddle, arms swaying useless, face contracted, eyes fixed fearfully on the brute's head. Then the peons, running alongside, jabbed the stallion with knife points and headed him for the *sabana*.

The horse bolted. Full tilt he ran into the open plain, going like fire before a wind. Twice before we lost sight of him he sprang up and shook himself; but his rider still hung on. Then in the end he disappeared among some little trees, galloping headlong away into the west. And on his back Diablo Caballo rode out of our lives—and out of his own—straight into the jaws of death.

FOR some minutes after Diablo was gone we stood gazing after him. Then Esteban, his face still set in hard lines, looked down at the weapons he held, slid them into his side pockets, picked up his stick and limped over to Diablo's sombrero, lying where the peons had put him to earth. This he poked along the ground with his cane, as if moving a dead snake to the fire. When nothing but a black ash remained of it he straightened up, once more looked about, and nodded to me as if seeing me for the first time—as perhaps he did.

"You return at an opportune time, Sixto," he commented. "As you see, I have attended to that matter I mentioned when you left."

Without waiting for a reply he hobbled off toward home. I stood a few seconds, feeling useless and rather foolish. Then to one of the peons I said:

"My piragua is waiting at the next *sitio* at the north. Go and tell my *Indios* to bring it on to this port."

"And you, Felipe," called Esteban, pausing, "go into the woods beyond the house and call for Flora until you find her. Tell her all is well and bring her in. But say not a word of this matter in the hearing of the señorita. *Comprende?* Not one word! If you so much as speak the name of Diablo Caballo before her I will have the skin off your back. *Vaya!*"

Felipe hustled ahead, acting almost afraid of his master. Esteban went on, and I moved after him. As we walked I suggested:

"It might be well, Esteban, to let Mariquita know the truth. If she knew what you have done to Diablo she might feel much more safe. How she is now?"

"Better, a little better," he told me. "And there may be some truth in what you say. But I shall not tell her now—nor ever, unless it seems best to me. The effect might be bad instead of good. For one thing, it might make her fear me. And that I will not have."

"*Bien*," said I. "You know best."

I was through with giving advice to that shrewd old man. And we kept on walking with no more said.

Well, it was a bit odd about Mariquita. I'm sure the peon who went after her obeyed orders, because Flora, when she brought her in, showed that she herself was still ignorant of what had taken place; in fact, the big girl asked Esteban at once, getting only a short answer to the effect that she would know at the proper time. Yet, in some way that I can't explain, Mariquita had lost her fear while she was out there in the forest. The terror that had been on her ever since she came back —as her father told me—was gone, all gone. Not only that, but her mind had brightened noticeably.

When she arrived I was standing at the door with Esteban—standing with my back to the woods, so that before I saw her it was too late to step out of sight—but my face had no bad effect on her this time. She recognized me, knew me even before I turned, and smiled at me as she

passed. And from that time on she steadily regained strength, both physically and mentally.

The medicines I had brought were a great help in restoring her vigor of body. But the point is that her worst trouble—the torturing horror and dread in her brain—disappeared before she took those medicines; disappeared when Diablo Caballo went to his death out there on the *sabana*. And I am forced to believe that somehow, without being told, she became aware that he could never harm her again. Just how she knew it is more than I can tell you. But she wasn't normal when she was taken into those woods; and how are we to know what perceptions an abnormal brain may have? Perhaps she had a touch of that queer thing they call telepathy, which I read about once when I was a student in Bogota. Anyway, it's a fact that she did grow better from that hour.

Esteban noticed the change instantly, of course. In fact, it was his expression that told me what a quick and unexpected change it had been. He went in after her immediately; and when he came out he looked happy for the first time in months.

"*Gracias á Dios*, she is at last on the mend!" said he. "And I will keep her so."

And straightaway he called his peons and ordered them to take machetes, guard the paths and stop all comers at a distance from the house, so that no loud talking should disturb the señorita. It was a good move and none to soon. For now men began riding in from all along the Row to learn what truth was in the wild tale that Diablo Caballo had been outwitted and sent to death by Esteban Pardo. The peon who had gone with my message to the piragua had talked, of course, to the men at that *sitio*, and the story had traveled fast. When the peons on guard told those investigators that it was true, then there was loud talk indeed. More than one rider swore that it was a lie, it was impossible, and demanded speech with Esteban himself—if he still lived. They grew so noisy that finally Esteban, still here with me, said rather grimly:

"We must stop this. Will you help me once more? I am a little tired, and not in the mood to speak civilly to these dogs who bark so loudly now but slunk about with tails between their legs while that Diablo lived. Take these—" and he handed me Diablo's gun and knife—"and show them to those who doubt. Then tell them to get out. I want peace here."

So I walked over, revolver in one hand and poinard in the other, as if I meant to use them. Those who saw me coming hushed up and backed off a bit before I spoke a word.

"Bold *caballeros*," says I, "Esteban desires peace and quiet. To get them he put an end to Diablo Caballo today and if necessary he can do the same to other disturbers. Look well at this gun and knife, and when you recognize them ride off softly, and tell any you meet to turn back."

I held up the gun by the muzzle and the knife by the point. They stared at the butt of the one and the hilt of the other, swore in amazement, and then rode out, convinced and quiet. Later on, when the thing had been talked to shreds all along the Row, every man able to ride went hunting for the place where Diablo had fallen.

They found it the next day. He had held his seat for a long distance. Maybe he was dead before he pitched off. If not, he was very dead soon afterward. As I said at the beginning, no man saw that finish, so no man knows. But there was evidence that the finish came about at that spot. That evidence was very fragmentary—smashed and splintered and scattered—but indisputable. The horse had taken his own personal and private vengeance for all past wrongs and then gone on into the empty distances. After that the vultures had come.

When there was no furthere rason for me to stay here I went on up the river, as usual. Before I went I remarked to

Esteban, out where Mariquita couldn't hear me:

"I remember that once, *amigo*, you told me that to catch Diablo Caballo off his guard could not be done. Then why did you try it?"

"I found that it must be done," he answered. "And when one knows a thing must be done, it can be done."

"With a bit of salt," says I.

"A bit of salt," he echoed, smiling a little.

And that was the last time we ever spoke of that affair. And, as far as Esteban and his salt are concerned, that's about the end of the story.

When I went away I expected that when I came down again I should find father and daughter living happily together again, either here or at Bolívar. But the *adios* I gave the girl that day proved to be a long farewell. Months before I made my next voyage she was gone.

Now she is living over in Trinidad, or was, the last I knew. When she seemed to be well again Esteban took her there, leaving this *rancho* to run itself and traveling on a piragua down to Bolívar, then going on by steamer. He was determined to put her in a safe place, and he had had enough of the Dorados and Bolívar. Trinidad is British, you know, but thousands of Venezuelans live there; and among them was an old friend of his who had grown prosperous in business but was childless. Just what arrangement was made I don't know. But I've heard that she was well and quite happy there. She wasn't the same little Mariquita as before, of course. She couldn't be, after that experience out on the *sabana*. But things turned out far better for her than I'd have dared to hope.

And so I never saw her again. Maybe 'twas just as well for both of us. We might have gotten foolish about each other; there's no telling. And the way I'm fixed— Yes, it's just as well.

I didn't see so much of Esteban, either, from that time on. He came back here, back to the place where he'd "taken root," as he said, and lived on as before, with his Indian girl and the peons and the cattle. But he grew moody and a bit morose, and I found him rather poor company, so I never stopped long.

And then one day I came in to find that he'd taken sick and died; Flora had gone back to her own people; the peons had scattered, the house had been plundered and nothing remained but this empty shell. And then later on, as I've told you, that shooting governor pounced on the whole Row and cleaned it out. So that's the end of it all.

Well, I see that the moon has come up, and if you don't mind, I'll take another little walk around the place and look things over again before I turn in. If you're asleep before I come back, *buenos noches!*

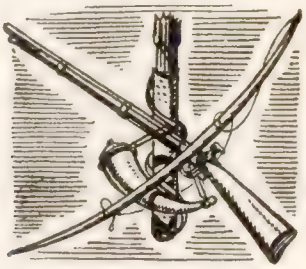
SIXTO arose and strolled out, moving slowly, looking for a moment at a space in the center of one of the blank walls. When he had gone I rolled a last cigaret, reached for the candle, and drew from it a light. Then I lifted the candle higher and peered at that same space on the wall. As my gaze dwelt there an outline took shape; a large rectangle faintly sketched on the clay by the dust of years—the print of a vanished frame in which had hung, through steady successions of season dry and wet, the crayon portrait of the child Mariquita.

And now we resume

The Fighting Years

HUGH PENDEXTER'S

Latest Novel *of* America



MY DUTY as scout for Forbes' expedition against Fort Duquesne went by the board when I saw the Beverly family—Mrs. Beverly, her mad sister Mercy, and Ann, her daughter—captured by a band of Indians under the Frenchman De la Rue. Determined to save the women, I joined the Indians, under the name of "Dandy Case," a Colonial fugitive from justice of whom I had heard.

In spite of some stolen papers which I gave him De la Rue did not feel sure of me, especially as Phindry, the scoundrel who had led the Beverlys into danger, denounced me, as did Fincer, the spy from whom I had recovered the papers. The women were inclined to believe my story, and hated me accordingly. Arlington, the old English man captured with them, took a neutral stand.

Although the Indians were eager for blood, De la Rue decided to hold all us whites until he could find out more about us. The arrival of Giga-tsuhli, or Bloody-Mouth, my Cherokee friend, posing as a renegade, seemed to make my position stronger.

I WAS pleased to observe the Indians were inclined to accept the Cherokee as an ally. Black Feather vouched for him. Bloody-Mouth could have taken him by surprize and killed him. Instead, he had provided him with a horse. White Canoe discovered that my friend spoke a western dialect, and the two conversed amiably.

"The Fighting Years," copyright, 1927, by Hugh Pendexter.

Phindry could not conceal his uneasiness at the situation. Whispering a few words to Fincer, he came to where I was sprawling on the ground and seated himself.

"Let's talk without fighting," he proposed. "We're alone. We can talk freely."

"Go ahead and talk. But you're the greatest liar on God's footstool," I said.

"I've told the truth in this camp. I never was such a liar as you are now," retorted Phindry.

"I lie to save the prisoners."

"They're in no danger so long as I am here to protect them."

"You turned them over to these red hellions for the sake of 'protecting' them!"

"Not so. I wanted to get in touch with any French officer in these parts. But you said this band had gone north. I never dreamed of meeting them as I did. Even then I could have saved Beverly from harm if the poor fool hadn't guessed the truth and made a jump at me. If you'd kept out of it all would have gone well."

"Well with Arlington?"

"To —— with him! I didn't want him to come along. I tried to get him to go back. I asked you to take him back. His blood is on his own head. He would come. He was crazy about Ann Beverly. For that alone I could watch him roast." He spoke under his breath but there was no doubt as to his jealous hatred.

"Are you fool enough to believe that girl will ever forgive you for leading her father into a death-trap? Do you think she'll ever forget you're his murderer?"

"Not his murderer. I never meant him any harm. I planned to let him find a few hidden pots of hard money and to get his consent to marry the girl. I meant honestly by her. Now you've come along and made it hard for me."

"The girl never would have married you."

"She would. Her father and mother were under my thumb."

"Never. And as you say, it's all spoiled now, anyway."

"No, sir! She'll be mighty glad to take me for her man," he insisted.

"What pressure do you think you can bring to bear?" And I was very curious.

He grinned wolfishly.

"There's three ways of making her come to me," he slowly began. He held up three fingers. "One I'd hate to use, as she'd never forgive me."

"Name it."

"By bargaining to save her mother from the stake. If I got her that way I'd always have to keep her in an Indian village to hold her."

"You— Well, go on. It's agreed you don't want her that much."

"But I do! I never wanted anything in my life as I've wanted Ann Beverly," he hoarsely confessed. "I'd sell myself to the devil to get her. So there's one way of bringing her to me that I'll use if necessary." And he closed down one of the three fingers.

"You've sold yourself already. The other two ways?"

"Make her come to me by saving Arlington, who's in love with her."

"And she loves him?"

He shook his head regretfully.

"I wish it was that way. If she must prefer another to me I'd be tempted to save him and let him go."

"Play-acting. You'd send poor Arlington to the stake in a second if you could. By your own tell you're insanely jealous of him."

His eyes narrowed and he smiled slightly, and conceded:

"All right. He is my second reason for making her come to me."

He paused and stared toward the fires. His frankness amazed me and held me at a high pitch of interest. We could speak with all freedom, as each could promptly denounce the other as a liar in case any of our talk was repeated to De la Rue. I felt he had left the third lever for forcing the girl to his will as a climax.

"That leaves us the third way," I prompted.

"The third way would be to save you from the stake. And that would come

—— hard." He drew a deep breath and stared at me gloomily.

It was an anticlimax. I agreed.

"Her pity for an unfortunate, regardless, almost, of whom he might be, might make her sell herself. But if she did she would kill herself once she was sure the ransomed prisoner was clear of you and your red friends."

"The pressure would be stonger than that." And he amazed me by displaying genuine emotion even if it was a deadly anger. Then it came in a savage rush. "You thick-headed fool! The girl's in love with you!"

I gaped stupidly for a few moments, and then managed to gasp—

"Either the worst liar I ever saw or the biggest idiot!"

"It's true," he mumbled and with no ranting in his voice and bearing. "That's why she was so upset at thinking you failed to help the Fairdens when you had the chance. Chambers' Fort is a lonely place. You're a younger man than I, —— you. You're a scout for Forbes. You're different from the other men at the fort. And what counted heavily, you were a newcomer. She's used to the rest of us."

It was plain he believed his mad words.

"See here," I sternly told him. "No more of that nonsense. The girl has seen me twice at Chambers' Fort and twice in this valley. She scarcely knows me. She's in trouble and I'll help her if I can. If you can arrange things so the three women can go back to the Conococheague with the Cherokee, that much will be to your credit. She wants neither of us. She's entitled to her sorry chance to find some happiness after seeing her father murdered."

"I say again I'm not to blame for Mike's death. He reached for his knife and leaped at my throat before I could explain anything to the Indians."

"He's dead. Get the woman away with the Cherokee, you staying here, and I'll bury the hatchet."

"One would think you was speaking on belts, and could make peace or war," he sneered. "You're a prisoner. You're not tied, but you can't get a rod from this camp. You won't have a chance on earth once you reach Kuskuski and De Niverville's answer to the captain's message arrives."

I believed him. I told him:

"We're wasting our breath. I'll see it through and I won't be harmed."

He began to argue:

"You can't name a commander on any frontier who will say you ever sent him any information," he said. "Chabert-Joncaire will brand you as a liar. So will De Niverville. So will any other commandant you can mention. Once you've faced any of those men how long will it be before you're in a Huron kettle or being scrubbed by red-hot gun-barrels?"

I knew I must escape from the war-party before reaching the Indian village if ever I was to report back to Major Andrew Lewis. I answered him—

"If it's all settled what's the use of this talk?"

"This. Clear out. Go back over the mountains. Escape. I'll help you do that. You can't help the women or Arlington. That mad woman may save him from the stake in Kuskuski, even if they paint all his face. I don't believe she can save him, but she may. I look for them to sneak him out of her sight and roast him before she knows what's up. There's no danger of the women being harmed. The savages will be glad to sell them for twenty pounds apiece in trade-goods. I'll ransom both. Once we reach Kuskuski I and Fincer will be recognized as French agents. Correspondence has passed that proves Fincer's case. I'm always safe."

"Fincer killed a man named Samp."

"Such a man died, I'm told. Fincer says he knifed him to get the papers."

"Because of his murder confession you are vouching for him?"

"Oh, I've dealt with him before. He has brought reports to me at the command of another."

Now we were getting to the point I wished cleared up.

"Who's the other?"

He remained silent. Finally he smiled grimly and replied:

"I don't know why I shouldn't tell. I don't intend to go back even if you're killed. The man worked independent of me and used me only for forwarding information that he couldn't get through from Philadelphia. He was foolish to use Fincer, who will get drunk. He didn't even dare trust him with the papers and ran the risk of having them found on his own person. It was planned for Fincer to bring me the papers up the creek. He got drunk instead. I went and ran into Fairden."

"You sang the French song and fired at me?"

"Of course."

"Who is the man who gave orders to Fincer?" I persisted.

He shrugged his shoulders and did not answer.

"You're French," I said.

"My father was a French trader. My mother was a Delaware woman," he bitterly replied. "My father gave me an education. My mother gave me a red brain. I shall never go back to the Colonies. When I'm not French I'm Indian. I remember how the English cheated my mother's people out of their land."

"Then why be tender about mentioning the name of the Colonial who used you as a go-between."

For the next minute he was all Indian.

"I owe the man nothing. I hate him and his race. You're welcome to go back and denounce him. Ensign Petny."

I was stupefied. When I could speak I hoarsely whispered:

"Petny?—It's one of your lies!"

"Why not Petny?" he quietly asked. "He's young and in love. He's in debt. French gold is as acceptable in Philadelphia as in Montreal. He sent Fincer to steal the papers. The fool filled up on rum and killed his man. Petny was wellnigh scared to death. He had to take charge of the papers or run the risk they would be found on Fincer, who would tell everything to save his own neck. He let him have the papers at the fort but took them back when he found the fellow getting drunk. He never dared trust him with them again until he reached Loudon and knew I was up in this valley. Then Fincer had to throw off his coat and leave them for you to steal!"

As he ran on I was recalling the ensign's haggard face and my failure to account for his depression.

"Petny!" I dully repeated, trying not to believe it, and yet unable to refute the accusation.

"He can watch his own kettle. He's nothing to me. He's a sorry bungler. Have him before a court martial when you get back. That would be a good service done the Colonies. It's your duty."

"You're mortal keen to be rid of me."

"Twice I've tried to shoot you."

"Once on the Conococheague. Where else?"

"When you and the Cherokee were making camp after leaving our cabin."

I did not tell him I had been blaming that dastardly attempt on poor Michael Beverly.

"Yes. I believe you want to be rid of me," I agreed.

"Then you'll go?"

"First, how will my going help you?"

He hesitated, then answered:

"The girl's in love with you. She'd cut her throat before she'd admit as much —now. But it's a fact. She believes you're a spy for the French. When she learns at Kuskuski that you're not a spy I'll have to tie her mother to a stake to get her."

I clasped my hands behind me tightly and muttered—

"Meaning, if I'm burned she'll know I'm not a spy?"

"When you're burned," he corrected. "Yes."

"Then she'd surely believe I'm not a spy if I ran away?" I reminded him.

"Well, she'd then think— Never mind what she may think. No one can know her thoughts. Question is, will

you escape if a way is found for you to do so safely?"

Now I understood as thoroughly as if he had completed what he started to say. If I ran away De la Rue would know I was an impostor. But that was of minor importance, as he would learn that as soon as he heard from De Niverville. What was of the utmost importance to the half-breed was to have Ann Beverly believe I had saved my hide and left her and her mother and poor Arlington in the hands of the enemy.

As to her being in love with me, no notion could be more preposterous. Phindry was half crazy with jealousy. He was a mixed-blood and his reasoning possessed neither the subtlety of the Indian nor the directness of the white man. There was a childish quality in his mental processes. I kept silent for two or three minutes, then told him:

"I'll think about it. I've no hankering to be roasted."

He glanced up, jumped to his feet and viciously cried—

"You're a —— liar!"

Then he returned to White Canoe, who was still hunting for meat in the bottom of a kettle.

The abrupt change in his demeanor was explained when Captain De La Rue dropped on the ground beside me. He remarked:

"It's queer such deadly enemies can talk in undertones so long. Do you know, M'sieur Case, I'm beginning to believe I wouldn't make much of a mistake if I let my Hurons burn the three of you—Fincer, Phindry and yourself?"

"M'sieur smells blood. It colors his reason. The man Phindry came to offer a bargain. I refused him. He fears he will sniff some smoke into his head at Kuskuski. He is a terrible scoundrel. Yet I will say no more."

"So? I heard what he called you. I wondered if he didn't speak the truth?"

"After you hear from De Niverville you will regret your lack of courtesy."

"Yes? And you've decided to say no more, eh? Did you ever see my red children work over a prisoner with a red-hot bayonet? Or one of Chabert's savages take a man apart without killing him and in sight of the kettle he's to cook in? No, of course not, or you wouldn't be so sure. The way our savages can induce a man to talk is remarkable. Why, M'sieur Case, I'm confident you would tell everything you know if properly urged."

"It's useless to threaten me, m'sieur. I stand on solid ground. Even more solid than you stand on. Your military record will scarcely survive this war-path. Play any tricks with me and you'll answer to De Niverville. Unless you kill me I will suggest to those high in authority that Arlington's ransom is too sweet a plum for a discredited captain to enjoy alone. Some of your countrymen are selfish."

"*Mon Dieu!* Upstart! miserable! I will close your mouth by ordering you into the kettle this night!"

"But what bag of talk will you open at Kuskuski when your runner returns with orders from De Niverville for you to send me to Venango, with safe passage, as is due a friend of France?"

For a good five minutes he said not a word. His voice was hoarse from suppressed enotion when he did speak.

"Look here! You promise to be a nuisance after you're dead. I am afraid I can not control my savages much longer. I will speak with them and hold their attention while you slip away."

He rose and joined the warriors grouped around Bloody-Mouth.

I believed he was eager for me to go, although it might be a trick to make me commit myself. Whether he believed me to be an impostor or a friend, I knew he realized that he had lost too many men to remain in favor with the savages. He dared not kill me before reaching Kuskuski for fear De Niverville would answer his message by endorsing me.

Arlington's ransom was his one chance of bolstering up his fortunes before leaving the army. And ten thousand pounds was too big a plum for him to keep all to

himself. I believed Arlington would be safe even after reaching Kuskuski. The crisis was behind him. Thwarted once, the savages would be more ready to listen to offers of new guns and trade goods.

The only question to be considered was whether I could accomplish more for the prisoners by keeping along with the party or by escaping and trusting to steal them away during the journey over the mountains. The Cherokee would soon join me if I left the band. It would not do for me to enter Kuskuski, where I would be virtually a prisoner pending De Niverville's message.

The small article Bloody-Mouth had pressed into my palm came to mind now. I was alone for the first time without being watched by Phindry, the savages or De la Rue. I fished it from the bosom of my hunting shirt and found it to be a piece of paper folded in a wad. With my eyes on the back of De la Rue's head I unfolded the paper and then glanced down.

The light from the fire was sufficient for me to identify it as the message De La Rue had started by runner to Venango. My friend, the Cherokee, had ambushed the runner and had killed him. There was no immediate danger of De Niverville's denouncing me as an impostor.

De la Rue turned his head and slowly got on his feet. I concealed the paper. He came up to me, his painted face very ferocious as he hissed—

"You refuse to go?"

"I can not go unless I know my going will help the two women to escape. You see, m'sieur, although a friend to France it happens I have taken a fancy to the young woman. She is all that would tempt me to steal away. Unless the women can go with me I'll keep to my original plan and go to Venango. Two women are not much to ask of De Niverville after what I have done for France."

"Pardieu, m'sieur! This is another matter not covered by our first belts," he mumbled. "We will sleep on it. I will confess, m'sieur, that until this moment I believed I was allowing an imposter to escape."

CHAPTER VII

FINCER'S MEDICINE

FOR hours during the night I weighed different schemes for rescuing the women and Arlington. My original plan for risking a visit to a French post in guise of a deserter or of the escaped criminal Dandy Case had not provided for Phindry as a traveling companion. Would I save myself from being turned over to the savages I must do so before reaching the Allegheny and coming in contact with De Niverville. This commandant would endorse Phindry without hesitation, and the witch-doctor would as promptly denounce me.

But my wits were slow in devising a workable plan. Mercy was the stumbling block. To steal her away seemed to be impossible, no matter how desperately I combed my brain. At sight or sound of a red pursuer she would begin shrieking her desire to slay. On the other hand the Beverlys would refuse to part from her although she was safe among the savages.

As I often had done before in a dilemma I decided to put the matter out of mind until we were closer to the danger zone and until I could seek Bloody-Mouth's advice.

The camp was early astir in the morning. The first thing I noticed was De la Rue's changed bearing toward Phindry and Fincer. He did not go to them, and when they sought him, and tried to talk with him he dismissed them curtly. Without waiting to cook meat the Frenchman ordered us to fall in for an early march. While the line was being arranged Phindry sidled up to me and accused me:

"You said something to De la Rue last night that's turned him against us. I'll even the score when we reach an Indian town."

"We talked none about you. I look for you to do your worst under all con-

ditions. As to the score you'll be lucky to save your own head."

He grinned sardonically and reminded me:

"I'm half Delaware. White Canoe has more power with the Indians than the Frenchman has. White Canoe is my friend. None of these men will follow De la Rue again. His medicine has spoiled."

I was glad to see Bloody-Mouth take the two horses to the women. Mercy went into one of her rages and Arlington helped the women mount.

Mercy rode with her sister, who kept an arm around her to prevent her from slipping to the ground and attacking any of the savages; Ann Beverly rode the second horse. Arlington, his painted face a constant reminder of his suspended fate, was permitted to keep with the women. None of the prisoners had their hands tied, as the Indians believed they could be easily caught should they try to run away.

De la Rue briefly warned them that their punishment would be horrible if they attempted to escape. He assured them they would be treated kindly if they accepted the situation.

The sun came up as we began climbing the ridge, but it was still dusk in the valley below us. The way led through tall and gloomy pines. The four prisoners were in the middle of the line. Ahead and behind and on both flanks were the savages. No attempt had been made to deprive me of my gun, and I ranged up and down the line as I pleased. I believed that De la Rue was hoping I would run away. If I did and was overtaken and killed by the savages he would not be greatly downcast, nor would he be blamed by his superiors.

I could select my own position in the path, but I did not walk with the Beverlys. While taking their place in the line they had not appeared to see me.

Arlington smiled grimly, but offered no greeting. Nevertheless, I was keen to plan for a further extension of his safety. Common sense told me the man was naturally accepting me at my own valuation, that of a spy and traitor.

De la Rue was brusk and cold, and scarcely more talkative than he had been with the witch-doctor. The latter and Fincer were well forward and directly behind White Canoe.

At the outset the Cherokee also preferred the Canoe's company, but after some twenty minutes of travel he stepped aside and waited until I came along with the Frenchman at my heels. My friend stepped into the path ahead of me and without turning his head he asked—

"Is a man following us?"

De la Rue quickly demanded—

"What did he say?"

"That your rear scouts should be farther back. And the advice is good if you would guard against a surprize attack from any of Forbes' scouts."

De la Rue shouted for the scouts in the rear to keep farther back. I assured the Cherokee:

"He does not know the talk of the Wolf People. Tell me if we shall come upon the body of the runner."

"We shall see nothing. Even the buzzards and bears will not get him out. There are no signs. The black earth is over him. His soul is black. Did the talk he carried help my brother?"

"It helped. At Kuskuski, or before, we must be ready to jump quick."

"The man Fincer is not brave today.

His blood turns to water. Phindry opened an ugly bag of talk. Fincer is afraid Phindry will not stand at his side. He will try to run away."

I scarcely believed this, but said:

"I will tell the Frenchman to watch him. Then he will believe my tongue was straight in what I told him."

"Let him run. Then the Frenchman will believe he is a liar and that your tongue is straight. If the Frenchman believes he is a liar he must believe Phindry is a liar. It will be better for my brother if the two men run away. Has my brother a talk?"

"You see me with a gun. You see me free to walk. I think the Frenchman's heart would be light if I ran away. When he does not hear from Venango he will send another runner. Before a man comes back we must go into the woods. We must take the women and Arlington with us."

"Only strong men can do that."

"We are strong men," I insisted. "Last night Phindry told me he, not Beverly, shot at us. He shot at us twice —on Conococheague Creek, and in the valley behind us."

The Cherokee slowly swung his head about as if looking down the winding path. His face came as near to showing some emotion as the heavy paint and his natural stolidity would permit. His low voice was even more revealing.

"That bad flesh must burn," he said. "My medicine was weak to let us think Beverly fired the last shot. It is bad I turned the wolf-ghosts against that man. They made him die. Giga-tsuhli's heart is heavy because he did not speak Phindry's name when talking to the ghosts. The Frenchman has a warm heart for my brother if he will let him run away."

I corrected him:

"He does not like me. He does not like the witch-doctor, nor Fincer."

"It is bad for Fincer he had ugly words with Phindry. Phindry has a friend in White Canoe. Phindry tells him he is an Indian and does not like white men. The Frenchman believes Phindry has turned all red and will work against French or English, or both. He dares not kill him, as the warriors like him. He knows this is the last path he will lead over these mountains. Fighting men will not follow a man who kills three men and loses five." As if inspired he eagerly suggested, "If they found the runner they would think Raven Mockers were chasing them. They would leave the Frenchman."

"That will not do," I insisted. "They would believe you did it. Let the black earth cover him."

His talk had convinced me a new danger was creeping around us. The friendship between White Canoe and Phindry might turn all the savages against the Frenchman and me. It would not be the first time Indians had killed their leader.

I suggested as much.

The Cherokee replied:

"The Frenchman walks on the edge of a black hole. Black fog is close to him. If he puts his foot down in the wrong place his soul will turn black. White Canoe is my friend. He says Arlington must burn. He says only one shall burn."

"He must not burn. Remember that, Giga-tsuhli."

"Giga-tsuhli's medicine is weak. Kanati remembers the death of his dog. I feel ghosts close to me. They may ask another life to cover the dead wolf."

"Arlington did not shoot the wolf. He must not burn," I insisted.

He was silent for several rods, and then informed me:

"The warriors have talked. They say they must make their medicine strong. They say five fighting men have been killed. They say they must burn a man very soon or they will lose more men."

This was the most important part of his talk and should have been given first. But I was used to Bloody-Mouth's indirection and was not surprized. He had come back purposely to warn me that the Englishman was in grave danger, and instead of telling it bluntly, as a white man would have done, he had approached

the revelation most circuitously.

"You two men are talking many things," spoke up De La Rue suspiciously.

"We have much to talk about, m'sieur," I answered. "He was telling me your savages are determined to burn a man to cover the bones of their dead."

"The superstitious dogs!" he muttered. "Three strong men let a crazy woman sink an ax into their heads and then blame their medicine, blame me! *Par-dieu!* If this keeps up they may decide it's best to burn *me!*" He regretted his words instantly, and quickly added, "That is my way of talking, m'sieur. They will never turn against me. I am their little father. They love me. I am the only man who can save M'sieur Arlington."

"When you save him you save ten thousand pounds," I assured him.

I had no idea the Frenchman stood in the slightest danger, now that I gave it second thought. Phindry might wish to turn the savages against him but White Canoe would not go that length. At Detroit and Mackinac French commanders had been slain only when a tribe revolted or when the Indians became insane from brandy or rum. De la Rue's men would refuse to follow him on an other path, convinced he was unlucky. Beyond that they would do nothing.

His eagerness to collect a handsome ransom from the Englishman showed he understood his waning popularity as a leader. A night's brooding over the enigmas presented by the rival claims of Phindry and myself had reached the climax of worry now that Phindry and White Canoe appeared to be fast friends. I urged:

"Get Arlington to Venango and ransom him and the women. Then you can retire from the army and live at ease. It will be better if the women can be sent back to meet the head of Forbes' army instead of being held for a while in Canada."

"You plan too much for me, M'sieur Case. I shall do what seems to be best after we reach Kuskuski. If Tamaque is not there I will send a runner to find him at Sawcunk. He can come and receive Chabert's belt. If I can get the savages and Arlington to that village I will call on the Delawares not to permit Far Indians to burn a man in their village."

"I shall be glad to exert myself at all times to aid one who stands so high in the esteem of my friend, Sieur de Niverville," I assured him. "Your savages would not ordinarily be allowed to burn a man in a Delaware village, where English as well as French belts will be received. The Delawares wish to keep out of the fighting. But Phindry is half Delaware."

We trudged along in silence for a minute, and his voice sounded tired as he exclaimed:

"—— take the muddle! Your friend has influence with White Canoe, I believe. Tell him to convince the Canoe the bones of the dead can be covered without another burning. It might happen that m'sieur himself may smell smoke."

"I am the friend of Giga-tsuhli. I will not be harmed. My position is better than that of any white man in this path."

He mumbled an oath or two, not at me but the general condition of things. He dropped back to be closer with the rear guards.

HUNTERS came in with three deer when we were half way up the ridge, and as we had not eaten that morning a halt was made on a broad, smooth shelf. Fires were built under the kettles when a spring had been found. The meat was soon in the kettles and we settled down to wait. Over the tops of the big pines we had an excellent view of the ridge behind us, and through the trees we could glimpse patches of the valley.

The Beverly women were bearing up well, but when I approached them they had neither word nor glance for me.

Arlington said—

"Sit down beside me."

I did so.

"Scowl and be ——!" he gritted, staring across at the lowering savages. Then to me, "I don't care what you are. I want you to help those poor women."

"The Cherokee and I already have discussed plans. I gave much of the night to thinking about it. Say nothing that man can hear."

I looked toward Phindry, who was slowly making in our direction. We watched him, and saw him halt before the women. He said—

"If there's anything I can do to help you, you know how anxious I am to do it."

Mrs. Beverly lifted an expressionless face and dully told him—"Git us back on the Conny-co-jig."

"I'm working for that. Ann, you know I'm working for that?"

The girl stared at him for a few seconds, then turned her head away without a word. But Mrs. Beverly was willing to talk, and she continued:

"You're friendly with these red devils. You've boasted that you're a spy for the French. God forgive you if He can! Now that poor Michael's gone, there's only one honest man in all this terrible mess—Mister Arlington."

Phindry's face darkened and he shot a malevolent glance at us.

"The Englishman will be lucky if he escapes the stake," he said. "The only man on this ridge who can save him or send you home is Dr. Phindry. And you don't warm me to my best efforts by acting this way, Ann."

"God help me be more neighborly then," she groaned. "Help us get out of this terrible trouble and I'll always remember you kindly."

"Don't worry, Ann. I have great influence. I'm a friend worth having now trouble's overtaken us. I'm just the same friend to you I always have been."

"—— him! He's honest in that," mumbled Arlington. "My dearest desire is to be alone with him long enough to wring his neck."

Phindry bent over the girl to talk further, but Mercy, who had been quiet enough, suddenly screamed and reached up and clawed at his brown face with both hands. With a violent oath Phindry leaped back. Then realizing that the savages were watching him and were interested in his startled demeanor, he seized the poor thing's hands, held them tightly and glared murderously down into her smiling face.

"Don't hurt her!" cried the girl.

I rose, pushed Phindry aside and reminded him:

"She knows you're a half-blood, Phindry. And you know her mania is to hate all savages. They killed her husband. Better keep away from her."

Then to quiet the woman I held up the bow as if to tie her hands. She became quiet, but would not shift her gaze from the witch-doctor's scowling face.

"God's goodness help us poor critters, Ann! He's part Injun!"

Mercy caught the word and rapidly cried:

"Injun! You're Injun! Kill 'em! Kill 'em!"

"You hellcat!" groaned Phindry. "I'd like to wring your neck!"

"You'd like to wring all our necks," whispered Ann Beverly, gazing at him in stark horror. "You tricked my poor father. You brought us to the valley. You brought father to his death. God can't overlook such bad work."

Phindry gasped as if choking but by a mighty effort mastered his rage, and in a husky voice he insisted:

"No one could see what was to happen. If I am friendly with the savages it's to save you two. Mercy will not be harmed. I lost my patience because her outbreaks may make it harder for you two. Give me a little time. Don't judge me too quickly. Poor Michael was my friend. I could have saved him if he hadn't drawn a knife."

"Rather he be dead, an honest man in his lifetime, than be alive and such a thing as you!" cried Mrs. Beverly, now

beginning to lose her self-control.

"Phindry, you're doing no good here. You must keep away from these women," I told him. "Don't bother them again."

"You'll yet beg me to come to you and give you a quick death," he warned, in a voice so shaken by rage as to be scarcely understandable.

Ann Beverly covered her face with her hands that she might not see him. Panting heavily, he stood there for a moment, then walked to the other side of the camp. I dropped beside Arlington. De la Rue had witnessed the scene, and was smiling slightly as if he had enjoyed it.

I told the Englishman:

"You are to be left untied. The Frenchman wants to ransom you. You're in no danger until you reach Kuskuski, and even then I believe you'll be safer than you were yesterday. Don't make any move to escape. When there is a chance I'll take it with you."

Mrs. Beverly leaned toward us and asked—

"Is there any chance to git away?"

"Not so loud. No chance now. When it comes we'll all take it."

"And you'd help us? You, a French spy!" she jeered.

"At least credit me with warning your daughter and husband not to leave Chambers' Fort. And I went to your cabin in the valley and begged you to return to Fort Loudon."

"Nolton, as a white man I ask you to help us get clear of this awful trouble," coldly began Arlington. "I believe you owe it to the color of your skin to do that, regardless of what you may be. My friends remember all your warnings, and they believe you knew the Frenchman was coming to the valley; that you were in the valley to give him information. But if you were the devil himself I'd beg you to help us and thank you for so doing."

The rôle I had adopted was cruelly hard. Could I convince them—which I thoroughly doubted—that I was playing a part it would mean reducing their chances of escaping. The Frenchman must believe me to be a spy. The women's loathing would strengthen that conviction. So I told Arlington:

"I can't help what you are all thinking. But I'm honest in this. Put no trust in Phindry, nor in Fincer. If he shows you an open path and offers you horses, refuse to go with him. If the time comes to escape, trust the Cherokee. He's as honest and as loyal to your interests as daylight."

"Kill him. Kill him!" screamed Mercy. And I shifted my position across the level space and threw myself down beside the Frenchman.

De la Rue had enjoyed Phindry's rebuff, but now he was frowning. He greeted me with:

"*Diable!* I am trying to decide who is in command of this band. Sometimes I think Phindry is. Then it seems to be you, monsieur."

Phindry was frightening the women. I stopped him.

His face grew more amiable, and he chuckled softly and muttered:

"The savages saw him. They believe you drove him away. They do not like a weak man. But he will remember you, m'sieur. I believe you would have been wise to have taken my advice last night."

"I started to go to Venango, m'sieur. Go I will. If I can't go in your company I will go ahead with the Cherokee," I stubbornly told him.

He was prompt to assure me I was welcome to travel with him, and his manner became quite gracious. He took pains to insist once more his only wish was to take all his prisoners to Duquesne or Venango. In finishing he reminded me:

"And yet we must remember there is something between you and the other two men to be settled. If you are what you claim, they are double traitors. If they are honest with Canada, you are a scoundrel. And I have promised my children the bones of the dead warriors shall be covered. Until we reach the

next range, if you change your mind, *bien*. Nights are dark. M'sieur is not tied up."

He still nursed the fear I would spoil his chances of enjoying all of Arlington's ransom. And he was still undecided whether to believe my story or that of Phindry.

The Indians now began spearing pieces of meat in the kettles. I sent the Cherokee to find some pieces of bark and succeeded in securing some thoroughly cooked portions of the venison. I hesitated to approach the women again, believing my presence was most disagreeable to them. The Cherokee would not go to them because of Mercy.

De la Rue relieved me by saying he would feed the prisoners. Forthwith, and with his best manner, he carried the bark platters to them, assured them of their safety and urged them to eat, to gain strength for the journey ahead which would terminate in freedom. Arlington translated this into English.

None of the women except Mercy looked at him, nor answered him. On the other hand they did not display the hostility they had shown to Phindry. They frankly accepted him as an enemy who was inclined to be merciful. He left them only to return with a small kettle of water. This time I could not hear what he was saying, as he talked in a low voice, but I knew he was trying to convince them they had nothing to fear. He left them rather hurriedly when Mercy's rage was finally aroused by his paint and Indian toggery.

THE line of march was reformed. Again Phindry went ahead with White Canoe, and again Fincer fell in behind them. The witch-doctor wheeled on him and told him to keep back, and added:

"When I want you I'll say so. When I say so, you come on the run. Until I speak you keep your distance."

Fincer stood, his hands convulsively clinched, and stared after them until the climbing pines shut them from view. The women mounted, Mercy again riding with Mrs. Beverly. Arlington walked behind Ann's horse. When the way permitted he kept at her side, and she, her head bowed, seemed to have much to say to him. The Cherokee elected to travel with the rear guard.

De la Rue curiously watched Fincer and smiled grimly.

"Rogues fall out," he whispered to me. "It is better for honest men."

With that he hurried to gain the head of the line.

Fincer fell in beside me and hoarsely asked—

"What did Phindry talk to you about last night?"

"Several things. Said you spoiled everything by getting drunk."

"It's a cursed business. I can still see that drunken old fool even if it was too dark to see him in the hallway. If he hadn't made a fight— Rum got me into it. I drink to forget it."

"You were suspected by Major Lewis before you left Campingtown," I told him.

"That settles it!"

I waited, eager to hear more but content to let the man take his time in telling it.

"Yes, sir! That settles it! I can never go back!" Another pause, and he was saying, "You're no spy for the French."

"Of course not."

"If I tell De la Rue what you now say you'll deny saying it?"

"Of course."

"Major Lewis will see me hanged if I go back."

I did not deny this. After a bit he asked anxiously—

"Can he get me back from Canada?"

"He can arrange it if he happens to have a Frenchman Canada wants exchanged."

"He has a long memory." This with a deep sigh. "If I hadn't thought that —— old fool was going to squawk for help I wouldn't have hurt him."

"Petny is very angry at your blunder. Samp was half drunk. A child could

have robbed him. If you had stolen his papers he would have believed he'd lost them. He wouldn't have been in any position to make charges."

He held his breath as I talked. When I finished he cried:

"——! How did you know? Petny couldn't have talked to you without putting his foot in it."

"Phindry told me all about it. If ever any of you three men is ever caught you'll surely swing."

He mumbled under his breath, then attempted braggadocio. He was defiant.

"Let 'em try that game. They'll have to catch me first. This is a pretty big country. Lots of room for a man to grow old in, or stay hid in till he's forgotten."

"Hard for a man who doesn't speak French to hide in Canada," I remarked.

"To —— with Canada. A man can have a snug home out in these mountains and keep moving just ahead of the frontier. He can git enough furs for his rum'n powder'n lead. Live like a king with no —— drill and fetch'n carry. To —— with soldiering. Quakers are fat and rich. They don't soldier. Why should I? Country never done nothing for me."

I laughed at him. My derision frightened him, instead of arousing his anger.

"See here," he muttered, "you're not so well off as you think you be. You ain't any call to laugh at me. They'll find out your game, once they reach that Injun town. I wouldn't swap places with you then."

"And I wouldn't swap places with you, my man, whether you're in Kuskuski, or in Canada," I promptly replied. "You were suspected in Campingtown. When you fail to return they'll look for you. If you stop in an Indian village the savages will give you up for a few pounds of lead and a few shoots of powder. If you go to Canada you'll be traded for some Frenchman."

"Bah! I can leave Kuskuski any time I want to."

"Not after Phindry has told White Canoe to keep an eye on you. You did the bloody work. Phindry has committed no murder that can be proved. He may want you near at hand so he can trade you and save his own neck after the French are whipped. He doesn't care to live in Canada."

"Huh! You think that's his game? Mebbe yes, mebbe no. Phindry don't love you, when it comes to that. Two of us could bolt mighty easy."

"No. I didn't have to join this band. I did so for a purpose. I'm going through."

"Then you're a —— fool. This is a pretty fair chunk of country to hide in." With that he drew on ahead, but his steps were heavy as if he carried a heavy burden on his back.

As we neared the top of the ridge we had a wonderful view of the country to the south. The lower stretch of the valley, spreading out to a width of two miles, carpeted with forest, patched with occasional openings and threaded through by the west branch of the Conococheague, could be followed far south where pyramid-shaped, isolated mountains were blue silhouettes.

De la Rue was waiting for me to come along. He fell in at my side and began—

"M'sieur talks with every one except the women."

"I do not seek talk. They come to me."

"What did the man Fincer have to say?"

"He is bitter toward Phindry. The two have quarreled. He asked me to run away with him. He is afraid."

"You carry your gun. You could have gone," he murmured.

I shook my head, then added—

"Not with that man even if I were a prisoner."

"You could have lost him any time you wished." I made no reply to this, and he continued, "Just as I said. Rogues always fall out. A rogue never can be loyal even to a brother rogue. Why do they quarrel?"

"Each fears the other will try to save himself by playing false. Both realize

the game is about ended. Fincer is an escaped murderer and fled to the Conococheague. Phindry fears you are remembering that belt Chabert-Joncaire sent and which failed to overtake you as planned."

"Ah, that Phindry! It's true he keeps away from me. He makes friends with my savages. But I must handle him gently until we reach the fort at Venango, or Duquesne."

"You may go direct to Duquesne?"

"I've been thinking Captain De Ligneris should be the first to learn that Forbes' army is on the march, if M'sieur Case's red friend is to be believed."

"He is to be believed." But I was disturbed by this possible shift of the Frenchman's plans.

"Then De Ligneris should know and start runners for Venango and the Niagara asking for reenforcements. General Montcalm does not like De Ligneris and says the captain is drunk every day. His Canadians are eager to go home. The officers grow rich too fast. *Ma foi!* Ransom money will at least be honest riches. And I've seen ensigns, who have managed to pocket fifteen to twenty thousand francs. Their superiors have profited in proportion." De la Rue paused, glanced at me sharply, then went on, "I speak frankly as to a friend of Canada and France."

"All you have said is of common knowledge in the Colonies."

"Yes? But of course. The English have their spies among us." Now he was suspicious again.

"The English do not bother to send spies into this wilderness, but to Montreal and Quebec," I told him. "But I am anxious to make Venango and talk with De Niverville. If you go to Duquesne give me a road-belt so the savages will let me through. I think Phindry will prefer Duquesne to Venango. Chabert's belt and bag of talk for Tamaque will be hard for him to explain."

"M'sieur, I have doubted you," frankly declared the captain. "Now I have a moment when I believe you. After it's all cleared up I hope I shall find myself owing you many apologies."

"Doubt every one, m'sieur, until he has proved his worthiness," I heartily encouraged. "Your doubts can not hurt the innocent; they may lead to the capture of a scoundrel."

He wrinkled his brows and reminded himself:

"Still that Phindry has sent us information for two years. He spoke well of Fincer."

"He will speak evil of him now. He can be loyal to no man, to no cause, when it profits his pocket to shift his allegiance. He has sent you no news of any value this season. I can tell De Niverville about Forbes' army almost to a man. I can tell how many and what kinds of guns he will take along. Phindry is in and out of Philadelphia and was recently at Campingtown. Where is his report on the army? I even obtained a list of the supplies the quarter-master general will move. Phindry prompts Fincer to say he got those papers, and killed a man in securing them. He added the killing because he knew Fincer was a murderer."

"The truth shall come out. If Phindry has deceived us—"

A shrill, quavering cry at the head of the march startled both and caused him to drop his sentence unfinished.

De La Rue went up the rest of the slope on a run. I kept at his heels.

At the crest of the ridge I noticed several of the Indians were missing. One warrior, standing motionless in the timber at the south side of the path, caught my attention. I halted and the Frenchman plunged on and vanished in the growth.

The women, still mounted, and Arlington were on the north side of the path. In the woods four warriors were guarding them.

Arlington called out:

"What's the matter? Why did these savages run away?"

I shook my head and looked about for the Cherokee. He was not to be seen.

Nor was Phindry or Fincer in sight. I spoke to the Indians north of the path, using the Mohawk dialect. They pretended not to understand.

Voices raised in anger demanded my attention. De la Rue and Phindry returned from the west. The Frenchman was greatly excited and was demanding—

"But why did you run with him, m'sieur?"

"I've told you. To bring him back. White Canoe will tell you the same," was the angry answer.

"You were so eager you forgot to give the alarm!"

"I didn't know what had happened," insisted the witch-doctor, and now there was fear in his voice. "I thought that he was trying to sneak away and a word from me would bring him back."

"*Pardieu!* You always have an answer. Some of my children will catch him. But you must realize this is a very bad business. This is something that can't be explained away by words."

"Why tell me that? Wait and tell it to Fincer. I'm not concerned in this," argued Phindry.

"Ah, m'sieur forgets! You vouched for the man. It is the same as if you spoke for him on belts. You brought a murderer to us. Now comes this bloody business!"

The last gave me a glimmer of understanding. I feared that great danger had suddenly developed for all whites in the band. I started to follow De la Rue and the witch-doctor into the timber where the one Indian stood as motionless as a stump. Arlington left the women and halted me, anxiously asking—

"What's the trouble?"

"Fincer ran away. But there's more to it. I'll find out."

I advanced into the timber and was met with a scowl by Phindry. De la Rue seemed to welcome my presence. He dramatically cried—

"See what that miserable one has done!"

He pointed to the ground behind the savage, and I beheld one of the Indians stretched out on his back. A second glance discovered the ghastly wound in the copper throat. The man must have bled to death very quickly. Although used to harsh sights I was taken aback, and turned and stared blankly at the Frenchman.

De la Rue harshly explained:

"M'sieur Phindry's dear friend, the murderer, killed one of my children without any reason and ran away. He left the line of march and was sneaking south when one of my scouts stopped him. He struck the man with a knife and kept on. It happened so close to the path that the scout's cry was heard. But he shall pay! I vow he shall pay!"

"—— him! Of course he must pay!" cried Phindry. "And I'll light the fire. No one feels worse over this than I do."

"You should feel badly. You brought him to us."

"M'sieur De la Rue, I am in no way responsible for what that villain has done. How was I to know he would go crazy up here on the top of the Tuscaroras and kill one of your fighting men?"

Now there was dignity in the man, and I knew the homicide had surprized him as much as it did the captain and me.

"You may have hard work in making my red children believe that," warned De la Rue.

"You'll be in great trouble if they don't believe it," countered Phindry. "Trouble at Venango. Trouble in Canada."

I laughed at him and said:

"Come, come, Phindry. You have no influence to harm M'sieur De la Rue."

"*Mon Dieu!* Certainly not!" wrathfully exclaimed the Frenchman.

"I have no desire to harm you, m'sieur, but I do not intend you shall harm me. If you try to make trouble for me over this dead savage you'll get no big ransom for the Englishman," boldly warned the witch-doctor.

"So that is it? You believe you'll be listened to if I say you tried to run away with your friend."

"I will always be listened to when I speak before Frenchmen of a big ransom

in gold."

De la Rue half closed his eyes for a moment, then shrugged his shoulders and said:

"M'sieur is confident of reaching Venango. We'll go back to the path. The matter is out of my hands. The savages will sit in judgment."

"By ——! That won't work," passionately cried Phindry. "No killing me before I reach Venango. I'm not to be blamed for what that crazy fool has done. If you try to turn the Indians against me, we'll see who can talk with the most belts. I am half red. White Canoe is my friend. You've lost too many fighting men to induce White Canoe to hang my hair in the smoke."

De la Rue suddenly decided I had heard enough. He ordered:

"Go back to the path, m'sieur. If you leave it again before this trouble is settled I will not answer for your safety."

"They'll not harm me," I replied. "My friend, the Cherokee, stands closer to White Canoe than Phindry does. I don't believe you're credulous enough to believe everything he says, or anything he promises."

However, I returned to the path. Arlington promptly left the women to meet me. In French I rapidly explained the situation. He whistled softly and murmured:

'What a mix-up! Plotting and stark tragedy up here in this God-forsaken spot!" He stared into the west as if finding the forests and ridges most bleak and depressing.

And did not one possess a love for the wilderness, and a gaze that sees far beyond tomorrow, there was but little of cheerfulness in the rugged mountains and silent valleys. There was something funereal in the massed pines and the eternal soughing of the wind through their tops, something hostile in the ridges, each a grim barrier to be conquered before the French could be ousted from the Ohio fork. Beyond the mountains was Duquesne, squat and menacing. The scene was not depressing in my eyes, however, for I knew the streams in the valleys. I knew the snug and secluded coves. And far beyond the horizon the wonderful Ohio and Kentucky countries were waiting.

Arlington went back to the women and helped them to dismount. I called to him in French to tie Mercy's hands to the long bow, but she rebelled and he contented himself with hooking an arm through hers. She endeavored to break away from him, and, as if smelling blood, went into a paroxysm, crying:

"Kill 'em! Kill 'em! Kill all of 'em!"

Mrs. Beverly clapped a hand over her mouth and sternly commanded her:

"Mercy, you hush or they'll tie your hands. They'll be bad to me and Ann."

Then the woman subsided, but her fixed smile and bleak eyes caused the Indians to keep at a distance.

A PIERCING yell from the southwest side of the ridge brought the warriors to expectant attention. After the yell had been repeated they whooped joyously, and I knew Fincer was dead, or captured. Although he was a murderer and a traitor I hoped he had met a quick death. I learned the truth as the searchers drew closer and kept up their ferocious rejoicing.

I motioned Arlington to come to me.

Ann Beverly caught the gesture and asked—

"What is it, mister?"

"They've captured Fincer."

"He's a bad man."

"They've taken him alive."

But she did not understand. Her mother, also, lost the significance of my words and exclaimed:

"He's a dratted skunk if ever there was one. I hope something will happen to that other dog." And she glared vengefully at Phindry.

At the first triumphant cry the witch-doctor and De la Rue had halted their talk. Phindry was mopping his round, brown face nervously.

I told the Beverlys:

"Get on the horses. Look out for Mercy."

The warning was a second too late. Mercy was free and was running toward a group of Indians, her eyes showing all the whites, her lips parted in the fixed smile. The savages quickly gave ground. I caught her and carried her to the horses and placed her in front of Mrs. Beverly, who passed an arm around her waist and talked earnestly to her.

As I fell back Arlington whispered—

"What's going to happen?"

"They'll burn him."

"Merciful God! The women must not see that!"

"No. They must be taken down the ridge. The Frenchman will have to go with them as no Indian will leave this ridge until Fincer's dead. You will go along with them."

Bloody-Mouth was the first of the searchers to appear. He sent his ax spinning high in the air and deftly caught it as it fell. Then he called out loudly, and the warriors danced in a frenzy of exultation. Black Feather assailed a stunted tree with his tomahawk and trimmed off the lower branches. Bloody-Mouth advanced and I said—

"Will they burn him?"

"If fire from the sky comes down and strikes his head, if the water in the valley rises and smothers him, they will not burn him."

"The women must not see it."

"Carry that talk to the Frenchman."

The shouting and yelling reached a crescendo of hate as the hunters came up the western path, dragging their captive. Fincer's face was bruised and scratched and his clothes were almost all torn from his body. And he was afraid! He was afraid of something infinitely worse than death. He was afraid of being kept alive. The torture he already had suffered from anticipation was almost enough hell even for a murderer.

On glimpsing Phindry the poor wretch screamed:

"You've got to save me, Phindry! You've got to save me! You got me into this!"

"—— you! Keep your trap closed or I'll be the first to fill it with live coals!" roared the witch-doctor. "You can't drag me into a fire."

The mention of fire set Fincer to raving. He dropped on his knees and prayed Phindry to shoot him. He tried to snatch a knife from a man's belt, but was held helpless. They did not strike him, simply held him powerless.

Some of the warriors advanced to Phindry, and his round face looked flabby. He called White Canoe by name. This man hesitated for a moment, then slowly advanced and stood beside him.

In a spasm of fear Phindry appealed to De la Rue:

"Tell them I had nothing to do with this. You'll be responsible if they touch me."

"Ask your friend, the Canoe, to talk for you. You said you had more influence with them than I have. This is something for my red children to settle. I shall take the women down the slope to spare them from what must happen."

I was glad to hear the last. Phindry did not offer to go with him, but braced himself to meet the danger. De la Rue called out to the man who had stood guard by the dead savage and gave him some instructions.

To me he explained:

"I am leaving the Englishman. I have given orders he is not to be harmed. He is in no danger until they vote on him again and paint all his head red. I can not take him with me. I will have enough to do in watching these women. His hands must be tied."

"I'll tell the women he is in no danger." This I did hurriedly and was glad they did not seem to understand the situation. The Frenchman started for the western slope and I joined Arlington as the savage was securing his hands.

"Am I in this, too?" he whispered.

"You heard De la Rue. You understand French. You're here as an onlooker, and that's bad enough."

Then I observed De la Rue was having difficulty with the women. Mrs. Beverly

and Ann had reined in and refused to go farther.

I ran to them and cut short their questions as to what was in store for the Englishman. I repeatedly assured them that Arlington would not be harmed.

By this time they had realized that a horrible tragedy was about to be enacted and were fairly sick. Ann Beverly hung her head and wept. It was miserable to hear her. Mrs. Beverly was horrified and terrified, but after witnessing the brutal death of her husband she had passed the climax of suffering. She heard my talk like one who, having given up all hope, has nothing to say.

De la Rue impatiently started the horses down the path. Ann called back to me—

"Save him!"

"He is in no danger."

"Then the other one. It is too horrible!"

"I'll do my best. Ride after your mother."

When I turned back I beheld Fincer naked and painted red on his head and neck. He appeared to be stunned. Arlington's eyes were round with dread as he watched these preliminaries.

"Turn your back on it. Before they light the fires I'll take you after the women."

"Can't you save that man?" he fiercely demanded.

I shook my head. I added:

"He's a murderer. He's a traitor."

"Don't sit in judgment," he groaned. "At least, he didn't torture his victim. No matter what he's been he was born a white man. Life for a life, if it must be, but save him from suffering. You said you had a way when they were threatening me."

I explained: "That trick can be played only once. I am confident you will never be painted and that when you reach Kuskuski and they take another vote it will be to ransom you. But I can play my trick only once."

Without any hesitation he urged:

"Then use it! Save him. It would be worse than death to hear him, even if I could keep my eyes away."

Here again was my dread responsibility. If once I spoke, if I succeeded, Fincer would die instantly and painlessly.

The death-tree was now trimmed to a height of twelve or fifteen feet. A long length of rawhide was over the lowest branch. The reds here had built a circle of brush around the tree. They were dragging Fincer inside the brush, tying the loose end of the cord around his waist. Already they had fastened his hands at his back. When the fire was lighted in front of him he could walk around the tree and for a few moments escape the baking heat. As the fire pursued he could continue walking, but each step would shorten the cord. As the fire completed its circle and he ran frantically he would soon find himself snubbed closely against the tree and must reverse his steps to unwind himself. These maneuvers would gain him nothing beyond a prolonging of his agony.

"Begin!" choked Arlington.

I walked up to the ring of brush and asked Fincer—

"You wish a quick death?"

"I'll bless you for it!" he pleaded.

White Canoe would have shouldered me away but the Cherokee stepped between us and rested a hand on my shoulder. My intrusion, however, was

resented, and the savages glared at me malignantly.

One man cried out—

"The white man must be careful, or he will get burned."

The Cherokee interpreted the threat to me.

Through my friend I told the warriors:

"This man says he has a very big medicine. He will trade it for his life. He says his medicine will stop a club, or an ax or a bullet from hurting a man. His medicine will not stop fire."

Black Feather and some of the younger men whooped derisively and impatiently drew nearer to start a blaze. One man was rapidly whittling a pine stick into splinters to be used in making the "little fires."

The older men exchanged glances. They had nothing to lose by deferring the torture for a bit. They could promise, learn about the new medicine and make themselves invulnerable, or prove the victim was a liar, and then take their time in killing him.

I told Fincer he must say something. Speaking in a dull, hard voice he commenced an apology for his atrocious crime. As he talked he stared fixedly at the savages. When he ceased I asked the Cherokee—

"Will they trade?"

"They will promise, but their tongues are crooked."

White Canoe stepped forward and motioned for the younger men to keep back. With the Cherokee repeating his words he told me:

"If the white man has a medicine to stop a club or an ax or a bullet, he will not be burned. Let him tell about his medicine."

"He says to cut him a little ax and a little club to hold in his hand. They must be very small."

White Canoe took a pine stick and with his scalping-knife soon crudely fashioned a tiny ax and club, which he gave to me. From my bullet-pouch I produced a bullet and directed:

"Take the rawhide from his neck so he can lie down. Let a young man bring a small branch of three different kind of trees to put under him."

Despite their blood lust the Indians were keenly interested. For generations they had firmly believed in the protecting power of their "medicines." They believed in medicines that would render them invisible to an enemy, that would make a gun shoot straight and spoil the gun of an enemy. A young man came running from the timber with a bough of pine, a sprig of oak and a branch from a bush.

I took these and showed them to Fincer. He said—

"Can I escape the fire?"

"I believe so. You still wish it this way?"

"Yes! Yes! Have done with it quickly!"

I placed the branches on the ground and motioned for White Canoe to untie the cord around his neck. White Canoe hesitated. There came a crackling of flame on the opposite side of the brush circle and Black Feather danced wildly.

"Too late!" gasped Fincer.

"You warriors do not want the medicine the white man says will stop a blow from any weapon?" I called out.

Bloody-Mouth instantly repeated my words.

White Canoe leaped over the brush and unfastened the cord. Fincer fell on the branches, his tied hands clutching the miniature ax and club and the bullet. Then White Canoe inquired—

"What does he do next?"

After Bloody-Mouth had interpreted I answered:

"He will prove his medicine. Let some strong man strike near him with a club."

The back of the circle was blazing merrily. As the first heat waves struck Fincer's naked body he shivered violently.

"For God's sake hurry!" he whispered.

"He says let a strong man strike," I cried.

White Canoe picked up a war-club with a big knob on the end and struck within a foot of the man's neck.

"There is nothing," he sullenly told me through the Cherokee.

"The medicine knows what you do. It does not work unless the man is in danger. Strike hard!"

The Cherokee, with much fire in his tone, repeated the command.

White Canoe raised the club and feinted several times, but each time his eyes glittered more brightly. A helpless victim was at his feet, the club was well balanced. The desire to kill swept over him and with a shriek of exultation he swung the club with all his might and the blow landed on Fincer's neck, breaking it instantly. Beyond a slight muscular movement there was nothing to show that the man was dead.

White Canoe stepped back and waited. As the figure failed to move his gaze grew dubious, yet he would not examine his victim. It was Bloody-Mouth who stepped over the brush and kneeled beside the body. He rolled the man over and the head fell limply to one side. Rising, he gravely announced in the Mohawk dialect:

"His medicine was strong, but White Canoe's club is stronger. The man is a ghost."

Black Feather and his companions howled in disappointment. One of the men started to scalp the dead man. White Canoe stepped in front of him and announced:

"His ghost is very near, laughing at us. The white man lied. His medicine was strong against fire, not against a club. He was very cunning. His medicine was strong enough to take him from the fire and to fool us. Yet he was a brave man to do as he did. This is a bad medicine place. His ghost has killed the white man."

I turned and saw Arlington stretched out on his face in much the same posture Fincer had taken. I turned him on his back and revived him.

Had it not been for my coat of tan he would have looked into a visage as ghastly as his own. The rôle of executioner, even though played to save a rascal from indescribable torture, sat ill on me.

"I remember," muttered Arlington. "Is it over?"

"He's dead. Painless. I feel sick. Get up."

"You were kind to him, Nolton—Case. May there be some one as kind to me if my time comes."

"I had saved it to use on myself if ever caught and sent to the stake," I wearily told him.*

Bloody-Mouth informed me:

"The White Canoe says we must go away now. He says this is a very bad place."

CHAPTER VIII

THE STORM

THE savages were impatient to leave the spot. They believed Fincer's ghost was flying about their heads. Nevertheless Arlington and I took time to bury the man. The savages impatiently waited at some distance, forming a loose circle. If I had been alone and had so desired I could easily have slipped away from them. Fincer's medicine had been strong enough to cheat and fool them. His ghost would possess the same cunning. They expected it to be malevolent.

When our work was finished we were hurried along the slope and after a mile of rapid travel came up with the Frenchman, Phindry and the women. Phindry gave us one glance and then walked on alone, his head bowed. Arlington joined the horrified women and talked in a low voice.

De la Rue braced his shoulders as if rid of a heavy burden. There was relief in his voice as he told me:

"It passed off well. I was afraid the sight of blood would set them on to the Englishman."

"There was no blood," I curtly replied. "As leader you should have stayed and

*Allan McPherson, one of Grant's Highlanders, escaped torture in this same fashion at Fort Duquesne, according to Rossiter Johnson's "History of the French Wars." See also, Col. Henry W. Shoemaker's monograph, "The Cumberland Valley and the Highland Regiments."

done what you could to save the poor devil from torture."

"*Pardieu!* I have enough trouble with the red wretches without coming between them and their lawful prey. Even Chabert-Joncaire doesn't venture that far. But no blood, says m'sieur?"

"He died instantly."

Mystified, he started to question me. I was in no mood to talk with him. He went to White Canoe, who gave him the details of Fincer's death. Then he returned to me and softly exclaimed:

"But you are a cunning one! If you can fool my red children so easily you may try to fool me."

"My only desire is to save the Englishman from torture, and the women from any more suffering. We are leaving the path?"

"To keep well away from Fort Lyttleton, m'sieur. There is a small garrison there and my men are not fit to make a good fight. Some day we shall burn it, but not now."

The Frenchman was making for the Old Trading Path, the most direct route from Philadelphia to the Ohio Fork. This path properly began at Raystown, and in intervals of peace had long been used by horse-trains carrying goods to the Indians and bringing back furs. Hidden at the base of the ridge on our left was Great Cove, where forty-seven poor people out of a settlement of ninety-three were massacred or taken prisoners after Braddock's defeat. Up to 1755 it was the Virginia frontier which had suffered the most cruelly. Now the savages were realizing it was easier to secure scalps on the Pennsylvania border, and the Colony's apathy in forwarding the Braddock expedition was being paid for most grievously.

Unlike the road cut for Braddock's army this ancient game, war, and trading path encountered no disagreeable portages but followed high, dry land. Had Braddock succeeded in gaining it after crossing the Youghiogheny undoubtedly he would have led his army to Duquesne and have taken the fort without any show of opposition. Braddock was dead from his own stubbornness and a blind faith in his regulars whom he cursed when dying; and it was for me and the Cherokee to wash the paint from Arlington's head and rescue the three women from the fierce people who, to their own amazement, had slaughtered a proud army.

The ferocity and daring of the Indians during '56 and '57 was now being leavened with great caution, thanks to Armstrong's daring and successful expedition against Kittanning. De la Rue's band was much depressed by losses and had no heart for a real fight. So we swerved wide to pass Lyttleton unseen and with a dozen scouts thrown out on our left to guard against any small scout band of my people.

Although danger of attack was remote, the Frenchman harshly warned us that we all would be instantly killed if any outcry was made.

To me he said:

"I am trusting you, m'sieur. But I trust no one completely."

"Watch Phindry. Waste no time on me. Lyttleton is the last place I want to see."

Finally we worked our way down the ridge to Burnt Cabins, where we halted for some of the scouts to come in. The charred ruins of two log houses were not pleasant for the women to see. They were burned in '50 by the Colonial authorities to stop settlers from taking up Indian land against the wishes of the red owners. De la Rue was extremely nervous while waiting for his scouts to report. Bloody-Mouth had refused to go out, saying it would be very bad for him if he were seen and recognized by any white scouts.

White Canoe was the first back. He had seen no enemy signs and had directed his efforts to scouting the way ahead. This he reported clear. Several others came without having discovered cause for alarm. At this time an ambush of four whites could have put the whole band to flight. Black Feather was still out when the Frenchman gave the word to advance.

We crossed a branch of Aughwick Creek and had crossed it a second time where it sweeps north to find the Juniata before Black Feather overtook us. He had his left arm in a sling made of bark. He refused to answer De la Rue's questions, which made the Frenchman very angry. He did consent, however, to explain his hurt to White Canoe.

The latter told us:

"This boy's head should be shaken to make him stop acting foolish. He did not look at his feet and fell down a rock and caught his arm on a dead branch and broke a piece off in his arm."

Some of the warriors jeered him for his clumsiness. Others were sullenly silent, thinking it a piece of the bad luck dogging them. They had left their dead in Path Valley. A white man's cunning—they gave credit to Fincer, not to me—had cheated them of a burning. Undoubtedly a very bad medicine was working against the band. Superstition rather than weakness of numbers put all in a nervous frame of mind that only a hasty withdrawal beyond the Allegheny Mountains would relieve.

The tired horses were urged forward over the rough way until I feared the women would be thrown and break their necks. The men sent ahead kept far in advance. Those bringing up the rear kept too close to be of service as scouts. De la Rue was vastly disturbed.

I had kept away from the women, as it was plain they did not relish my company. Now the Cherokee brought word they wished to talk with me. I caught up with them and observed that Mercy's hands were tied at her back instead of to the ends of the bow, and that a gag of rawhide was tightly secured between her teeth.

Arlington noticed my displeasure and explained:

"The Frenchman told me to do it. She was working herself into a screaming spell. He said he would kill her with his own hand if she made any noise."

"It's best that way for a little while, mister. I feel mortal bad for her, but she will hoot and yell at times the best a body can do," said Mrs. Beverly. "Mister Arlington says you played a smart trick on those red devils and cheated the fire."

I nodded, not caring to discuss the grim tragedy.

"You done well," she heavily continued. "Not that I'd cared much if they'd burned him if they'd burned Phindry at the same time. But I'm glad you fooled 'em so good. Mister Arlington says that no matter what you be you are keen to help us poor women to git free of this mess."

"That is true. But not so loud. The Frenchman doesn't understand English very well, but he might catch a few words."

Mrs. Beverly was silent for a minute, her face drawn in tragic lines. She bowed her head and brooded. Even Phindry or a savage should have pitied her. But there was small pity in the world when the red man was created, and the witch-doctor was half red. Finally she lifted her head and said:

"What happens to me don't count any more, mister. My life's finished so far as happiness counts. Michael's gone. World's mortal empty. But for the sake of my girl I'll make a desperate try if you find the thinnest kind of a chance to git us away. You can't lead us into any torment worser'n what we've been through."

"Mother!" moaned the girl.

"Hush, Ann. I don't say he'd play us any tricks. I just say he can't play us any worse tricks than what we've already suffered."

"I'll play you no tricks. God forbid the thought! You must live for your daughter. You must help her out of this muddle. You're her mother and she looks to you for help. You're a brave woman. You know what your husband expects you to do. He knows you'll never let your girl be carried into Canada if you can help her to escape. Not that Canada would be so bad, after what's happened, but he knows you wouldn't give that Frenchman the satisfaction of

taking you three women there. I've told you before I would help you."

"You're a spy for the French. You brought papers to the Frenchman," whispered the girl.

My only chance of saving my own life, of aiding them in any way, was to share my secret with no one. And yet I could not debase myself again by telling her a thorough lie. I replied:

"I gave him Sir John Sinclair's papers. I say again that if you can't trust me you can trust the Cherokee. When he gives the word, do as he tells you. We must not talk any more. The Frenchman is suspicious."

I halted and let them ride ahead. As I had expected De la Rue came up and sharply queried—

"Why did you go to the women, and what did you talk about?"

"They sent for me to ask me to arrange for their ransom. The Englishman is anxious to ransom them. You're willing he should pay for four instead of one?"

"*Pardieu!* I will say yes. Gladly. But it will take the devil's own planning for me to buy them from the savages. This is the worst path I ever took. Luck has been very bad."

"One can't have everything his own way all the time," I reminded. "Your men are afraid of their thoughts. If they meet any of the provincials they will run."

"If it comes to that they'll kill the prisoners first," he moodily said. "It began with those two old men, the Fairdens. I would have saved them. I did not know they were in danger until too late."

"You should have no more trouble. Do we go to Venango or Duquesne?"

"Now I think it will be Venango. Unless the unexpected happens. At Venango I'll be rid of Phindry and m'sieur will have the pleasure of meeting his old friend De Niverville. It depends on the savages."

I received this announcement with expressions of great favor. Truth was, if I failed to escape before reaching either place I was undone. I might have a bit of leeway if taken to Duquesne, but only long enough for another runner to reach Venango and fetch back word from Sieur de Niverville. If the Cherokee had not met and killed the first messenger I would have been measuring my life by inches.

We began working south, and gained a narrow path that led over Sideling Hill to the Juniata Crossing, some fifteen miles. It was as far again to Raystown. We were not permitted to halt until close to the first of the ridges called Sideling Hill. We made camp.

The savages would not fire their guns for fear of attracting the attention of men scouting far from Lyttleton. With their arrows they killed turkeys and squirrels, and the kettles were hung to boil in a thicket.

Black Feather continued in disgrace because of his clumsiness, and sat sullenly apart nursing his wounded arm. None of his companions had examined the wound and he was too proud to ask them. I halted before him and, acting on impulse, drew the member from the sling. He glared at me as I examined it.

The stub or stiff end of a branch had penetrated deep into the muscles of the upper arm. He had endeavored to cut into it with his scalping-knife and had made a sorry job of it. The lacerations indicated the stick had broken off deep in the flesh.

I walked to the fire and cleaned the point of my hunting knife by holding it in the blaze. On returning to the young man I found he had replaced the arm in the sling. I sat down and removed it and cut deep until I could get the point under the big splinter and draw it out. The wood was brittle and it required time to make sure all the particles were removed, yet a stump could have been no more immovable than Black Feather as I slashed and dug. He stared at me intently but said nothing as I put up my knife.

Phindry kept much by himself; at least he had kept away from me. Nor did he approach me now the kettles were boiling. De la Rue endeavored to talk with him but soon left him, his face screwed into frowns. White Canoe remained at his

side for a few minutes and the two exchanged some words.

Bloody-Mouth informed me:

"The witch-doctor is turning black in his soul. Fincer's ghost keeps close to him and drops black earth upon him."

"He is bad flesh. But he isn't afraid of ghosts," I replied.

"He was born half red. Now he is all red. He empties his head of the white man's thoughts. He hears black earth falling on his soul."

This led me to study Phindry more closely. He had changed. There was something different in his bearing although I could not describe it. At times he held his head on one side, as though listening. And if the changing light of the fire was not deceiving me his eyes had a stark staring expression. He kept aloof and did not seem to be interested in the simmering kettles. He would stare at the earth between his feet for several minutes, then suddenly jerk up his head and glare around as if hearing a summons.

Black Feather dropped down near me but did not look at me. Without glancing at him I remarked—

"Ghosts follow that man Phindry."

The Cherokee repeated this in a western dialect. Black Feather turned his gaze on the witch-doctor, then quickly shifted his position so he could not behold him. After a bit he left us and spoke to some of the men. What he said was repeated to others, and each in turn stared intently at Phindry.

That night Phindry deserted us, and if any of the guards knew of his going they did not attempt to stop him. De la Rue was angry, for he feared the man would reach Venango ahead of us and spoil all chances of an undivided ransom. But the savages were pleased.

Bloody-Mouth explained to me:

"The men feel better now he is gone. White Canoe says he saw Fincer's ghost in the top of a tree. He says it followed us from the Tuscaroras. Now he thinks it is following Phindry and White Canoe won't see it again."

The ghosts of Michael Beverly and the two Fairdens were not bothering the savages any, but they had decided Phindry was bad medicine, and they were glad to have him go.

While we were making ready to resume our journey I exchanged a few words with Arlington but did not go near the women. He told me Ann Beverly was bearing up well, but that Mrs. Beverly was greatly depressed or physically ill. The girl's worry about her mother caused her to forget, in a measure, her own plight. Mercy, now freed from bonds and gag, was very quiet, and as there seemed remote chance of our encountering any frontiersmen De la Rue consented to try her untied.

"Miss Ann says her mother will die before we reach the French fort," said Arlington. "She is praying that we escape very soon. She fears that you, carrying stolen papers to Venango, will scarcely play fugitive." And he studied me closely.

"De la Rue has the papers. Tell her Mrs. Beverly is of much more importance than any papers and that we will try and run away at the first chance. But explain that we must wait until we're beyond the Alleghenies."

"That means a lot of walking and hardships, a greater distance from the Conococheague."

"You're suspicious. But you mean well by the women," I told him. "And my judgment is better than yours."

"If you use your best judgment, Mr. Case—I've decided to accept you as Case instead of Nolton."

"That is right. Once over the Alleghenies the savages will be less watchful. If given an opportunity to escape we have better choice of direction."

"Case, I don't think I agree with that. The only direction they wish to take is back to the Conococheague. The farther they travel the more ground they must cover, the greater the dangers they must endure."

"If we ran for it now they would be at our heels, for we can only go back over this path," I patiently explained. "But

beyond the Alleghenies, when they are about to turn northwest for Venango, we will have an excellent chance of dodging them, of hiding until they tire of looking for us."

He left me but I believed he was far from being satisfied with my proposed delay. He failed to appreciate the fact that it was useless for us to run unless we had lead enough to find a snug hiding-place and wait for the chase to pass or tire itself out.

We began the ascent of the first ridge of Sideling Hill, and Arlington was annoyed because the "hill" consisted of more than one ridge. We must journey up and down and cover some eight miles before we could descend into the valley of the Raystown branch. This day I kept close to Bloody-Mouth who was following directly behind Black Feather and White Canoe.

The day was clear and from the first elevation we looked into the virgin wilderness of the valley ahead and below us. There were no amiable openings; no smoke of humble homes to humanize the scene. There were only the wild forest and mountains of different shapes and colors. Some were wooded completely, some were gauntly naked. I had gazed on it before and was pleased with the loneliness of it all. Now that there was no one waiting for me east of the Susquehanna there was nothing ungracious in the scene. I even found myself thinking some of the unfortunate Fincer's thoughts. Wherever I turned my gaze I saw ideal places for snug and hidden homes.

I imagined that Arlington, ahead, was finding it repelling. Possibly he was constantly remembering that each step was so much nearer to the second vote by a war-club as to his fate.

Down we wound our way for half a mile of rugged path, and having plumbed that particular depression we were called upon to assail a more lofty slope. Reaching the crest of this we found the mountains more crowded, more lofty. They surrounded us on all sides, sprawling like shaggy green or gray-skinned monsters. And through the notches of those in the foreground and middle distance our gaze beheld the blue summits of far distant heights.

After a breathing spell we plunged down once more, into the mists rising from deep coves to meet us with the east wind hurrying up rafts of clouds to settle down as if to overtake us. Even I, much as I loved the grandeur of that rough country, found little to admire when we reached the end of the second rough slope and entered an atmosphere that was almost aqueous.

We halted long enough to rest the horses, although De la Rue was in great haste to get beyond the last western barrier. Doubtless he was picturing the witch-doctor hastening on ahead to tell the French at Venango of the rich Englishman to be ransomed. I feared we were in for a prolonged spell of wet weather, but as we climbed the third ridge the sun conquered the clouds and drove the rising patches of mist back into the coves. Scarcely a cloud was in the heavens when we finally gained the third elevation.

The entire horizon was thickly piled with mountains, and one might get the impression that they were tumbling over each other in their desire to press close about us. I marveled that our first settlers had ever managed to find their way through them. Those who have lived to see much of the land cleared can have no idea of the tremendous confusion in one's mind when seeing for the first time that endless forest roof from a height. Below us little and big valleys, or coves, were hidden by the mists.

We rested for an hour and ate what was left of the cooked meat. The savages appeared to have lost much of their uneasiness. I was inclined to regret the fact. It was my desire to attempt escape at a moment when they were ridden hard by their superstitious fear, and when any pursuit would be half-hearted.

The descent was slow and arduous and in some places the rocky way was broken by precipitous places. These afforded

much difficulty for the horses and the women were compelled to dismount and slide or climb while the animals were taken around the barriers. De la Rue was unwilling to lose any time in looking for a more gradual descent. We climbed over giant logs of fallen trees covered thickly with fungi, mosses, ferns and lichens.

It was especially difficult to pass over a tumbled mass of trees where shoots of maple and beeches had taken root. Then again we were in a narrow, dark path of an ancient growth of pine, where the beautiful red of the ground-berries growing among the mosses was the only touch of color to relieve the somber way. There was an occasional fusillade of knocking and hammering as we came upon small flocks of the great black woodpeckers working on the dead pines. At a distance their bobbing red crests looked like violently agitated tiny red flags. Half way down it became too dark for any but a savage or a frontiersman to travel, and we camped on a broad shelf of rock.

In the morning the hunters went out and came back rejoicing. They had killed a bear. The animal was lean but we managed to make a breakfast. By Arlington I sent part of my salt to the women and urged him to see that they ate heartily.

Refreshed by the sunshine, we made short work of the remaining distance and gained the steep banks of the Juniata. From there on we traversed a range of hills, sometimes moving through the mysterious gloom of thick woods, sometimes enjoying the light of a natural clearing.

De la Rue no longer urged haste. Doubtless he was realizing that nothing could prevent Phindry from reaching Venango ahead of him.

Mrs. Beverly rode and walked with her head bowed but seemed to be standing the journey well. When I remarked as much to Arlington he disturbed me by insisting:

"Her mind is so weighted down and beclouded by grief and despair that I'm afraid she will collapse."

I urged him to keep her moving, and warned him the savages never allowed a prisoner's condition to hold them back.

"Once they believe she can not make the journey they will tomahawk her," I added.

His face blanched on the unpainted side. In a muffled voice he declared:

"The more I see of these red hellions the less I like them. But I'll try to keep her up."

We frequently glimpsed the winding river below us and at times descended and followed along the bank before being required to mount another hill. We were now back in the old path leading to Raystown, where the Old Trading Path began. It was no "town," however, but simply a spot where an early settler by the name of Ray had put up a log house or two in a cove hemmed in by mountains on the south and west.

DE LA RUE avoided me. In fact, during this stage of the journey he kept much by himself and appeared to be brooding over something. His savages told Bloody-Mouth he was making a new medicine. Once when I approached him he scuffed his moccasin over some marks he had made in the earth with a stick.

I said:

"Phindry manages to keep his lead. He'll be in Venango sometime ahead of us. He's half red. He travels fast."

"I wish the devil had him!" he gritted.

"Amen to that! Had him and all these other bloody creatures who follow you."

"Bloody when they follow a Frenchman. Noble creatures when they accept English belts at Easton. You do not speak like a loyal friend of France."

"I'm tired of being yoked up with savages. I wish neither side employed them."

He laughed harshly and jeered:

"You talk like a foolish man. Are they to jump out of the way, and dodge about, to keep clear of the fighting? Forbes is striving, Sir William Johnson is striving, George Croghan is striving—all striving to secure the aid of red axes. And they are

wise. Those Indians who won't leave their mats to help the English will fight against them. When two men enter a stranger's house and commence fighting, the householder must side with one to oust the other. Then, if strong enough, he will oust the remaining stranger. Either that or give him half his house. Neither France nor England can get along without the savages' help in fighting the other."

"And the savage loses, no matter which wins."

He glared at me angrily.

"I don't like such talk. His Gracious Majesty will win, and therein is the salvation of the savage in both material and spiritual things."

He turned on his heel and left me and I paused to scrutinize the mold, but his moccasin had obliterated the marks. Beset with vague fears, I found Bloody-Mouth and asked him to fall back and talk with White Canoe and learn our destination for a certainty. I had no logical reason for believing the Frenchman had changed his plans, and yet I was suspicious.

Bloody-Mouth could learn nothing, although White Cloud undoubtedly knew whither we were bound. I suggested that he talk with Black Feather and tell him I was curious to know. He reported that the young man refused to give him any information. At least the young man had said nothing.

An hour later when I was with the scouts ahead and we had halted for the band to come up, Black Feather joined us. He had discarded the sling and I examined his arm. It was healing wonderfully fast. He said nothing as I pulled him into a patch of sunlight and scrutinized the hurt. When we could hear the sound of the main band approaching the scouts glided on ahead. I remained to speak with Bloody-Mouth, who was in the rear.

Black Feather disappeared in the growth with the others but soon reappeared. He glanced swiftly about and listened. Then with the toe of his moccasin he rapidly made a rough map in the forest mold, showing the position of Venango and Duquesne. Staring at me sharply for a moment he eliminated all of the map except that part representing the Ohio fork. I bowed my head slowly to show I understood. He quickly erased all the marks and scattered bits of twigs and leaves over the spot. Then he vanished in the growth to join the scouts ahead. Naturally I credited my rough surgery with securing this bit of intelligence. And yet I was not sure.

If De la Rue avoided Venango because the witch-doctor was ahead of him, then Phindry must be a man of more importance than I had believed. If he could spoil the chances of the Frenchman of enjoying all of the Englishman's ransom, De la Rue could not, as I saw it, gain anything by making for Duquesne, and thereby delaying his return to Montreal. Of a certainty he never could lead his prisoner to the Niagara portage without visiting Venango unless he conducted him alone. His savages, already weakened in their alliance with him as commander, would never pass the French fort without halting for a debauch on brandy.

So far as my case was concerned my fate was sealed if I went to Venango. Even if Phindry did not exist it was a death sentence for me once I faced the one-eyed commandant and heard my claims denounced. My only interest in learning the truth was to decide when to attempt an escape. Thus far we had had not a shadow of a chance of proceeding more than a few miles before being recaptured.

A few days ago the Frenchman had urged me to escape. At that time he would have been glad to be rid of me. Now it was different. If he succeeded in restraining the savages from painting the other half of Arlington's head he must give them both women and pay an excellent price in buying them back. But if I should be branded as an impostor, then he would have a victim to turn over to his savages and there would be less inclination to send Arlington to the stake.

In this fashion I tried to read his thoughts and plans. I did believe he was inclined to think me a spy for the French. De la Rue, himself, broke up my meditations and revealed the cause of his brooding. He came to me and walked by my side. By and by he remarked:

"Soon I should be meeting a runner from Sieur de Niverville, m'sieur. I expressed the wish an answer to my message be sent back at once."

"The way is long. The man has scarcely had time to make the fort at Venango yet," I replied.

"He was to go to Fort Duquesne, not to Venango."

My heart gave a peculiar jump. Duquesne was much nearer than the northern fort on the Allegheny.

"Then he will be returning the sooner," I said.

"I have met Captain de Legneris, but my reports have always gone to De Niverville. Now it is only a question of finishing the journey before you will be making arrangements for the Englishman's ransom. Remember, he is eager to pay for the women."

"All that is easily settled, m'sieur," he glumly replied. "But the other matter bothers me—my promise to my red children. Either two men, or one, is to go with them when we reach the Allegheny."

"Phindry still lives. Demand him from De Niverville."

He laughed shortly.

"No luck in that direction. If he's sold himself to both sides the fact remains he's known to De Niverville. He will patch things up at Venango. At the worst, for him, he will pass through and make for the Niagara. He is half red. Once among Chabert's wild children he will be safe. And that Fincer is dead."

"What are you hinting at?" I sharply demanded. "That I will have to go to the stake to fulfil your promise?"

He was genuinely surprized.

"How can I give a man to be burned who insists on going to Venango to meet Sieur de Niverville? It is the Englishman I am worrying about. The Englishman and his big ransom in gold. I fear they will say their medicine tells them to paint the rest of his head. They've lost too many men not to burn one. Even Chabert-Joncaire would have to find them a man for the stake. So we must travel faster and get M'sieur Arlington to a fort before they decide to finish painting him for the fire."

Now I had the true reason for his cutting down his journey by making for Duquesne. He was living in fear that his savages might demand their victim at any hour.

At the first opportunity I told all this to Bloody-Mouth. He promptly encouraged me:

"My brother's heart should be light. We will not go to Duquesne nor to Venango. To walk into Venango means to bury the soul in black earth. And there is a black fog over Duquesne. We must get away."

We camped a mile north of Raystown. It rained during the night and the dark hours passed miserably, as we had no shelter. I expected to find the women in a state of collapse in the morning, but was surprized to observe that Mrs. Beverly was more alert and displayed something of interest in her surroundings. Her face was haggard from sorrow rather than from physical suffering, but I was glad to perceive determination in her eyes.

Ann was pathetic in her pallor. Dark lines under her black eyes gave her the appearance of being all eyes.

Mercy was weatherproof. Her eyes were round and wide and her lips were parted in the same ghastly smile. Since she was gagged she had indulged in no outburst. The Indians were becoming used to her but still avoided her. The edge of their fear, so far as physical harm was concerned, was blunted. Mercy was mild in her bearing. She was silent. She did as she was told.

Yet all this was a cunning bit of acting to serve her inexorable hatred. While we waited for the sun to break through the dull sky she came near to killing a

man. That is, she surely would have scored a death had it not been for Ann.

She had finished her share of a hearty breakfast and Ann was cleaning De la Rue's hunting-knife by stabbing it into the ground. White Canoe happened to be standing near, with his back to the women. Quick as a catamount, Mercy was on her feet, the knife in her hand. She would have planted the blade in the man's back had not Ann leaned forward, caught her by the ankles and held her until the Indian could leap far to one side. I promptly disarmed her, for no Indian would touch her, and tied her hands to the bow. She commenced shrieking, "Kill 'em! Kill 'em! Kill all of 'em!" Nor would she cease until I threatened to tie the rawhide gag between her teeth.

De la Rue warned me:

"If that —— cat knifes one of my men some prisoner will die before we reach the fort." And his worried gaze was turned on Arlington.

We were in motion two hours after sunrise. The horses were worn thin and neither could carry double. Much of the time all three of the women were afoot. Our route was between the Raystown branch of the Juniata and the heads of Wills Creek and over low hills and thick woods. The path was good, however, and we made excellent time in covering the ten miles that brought us to the foot of the first ridge of the Allegheny range.

De la Rue announced we would not camp until we were half over the mountains. So we toiled up the slope and were halted for half an hour by a three-foot rattlesnake sunning on a rock in the path. Arlington would have cleared the way with a club or stone had not the Cherokee been near enough to stop him.

White Canoe advanced and talked to the snake, calling him "Grandfather," and politely expressing the wish he would not mistake us for enemies and hurt us. The snake remained coiled and showed no inclination to move.

Bloody-Mouth advanced and told the snake:

"Utsanati*, as you once were a man and saved men from being killed by the Sun, you are our friend. You are chief of all the snakes. You will move away and let your brothers pass."

The snake slowly uncoiled and glided into cover and we advanced. This increased my friend's prestige among the warriors.

I walked beside the women for a bit but when I would have given a helping hand to Mrs. Beverly she ignored me and caught Arlington's arm. Her daughter remarked: ,

"Doctor Phindry ran away. Why?"

"He and the Frenchman do not agree."

"God give we never see him again," she murmured.

"He'll not bother you any more," I promised, and passed on.

But I carried with me Phindry's talk the night he urged me to escape and his ridiculous reason for speaking so bluntly. His infatuation for the girl had turned him daft. Had he suspected her of a fondness for Arlington, pleasing and courteous, he would have been sensible enough. The Englishman had a way and a bearing, and was a person who was bound to please.

My long hair hung down so I could see the ragged ends, and my forest dress was a woeful sight. My face was leathery, my nose a crag. Aside from all this the Beverlys believed me to be a scoundrel, even if not quite bad enough to witness their undoing. Ann Beverly was the most handsome woman I had ever seen; but I was done with soft sentiment, having finished my schooling when Elizabeth Joy dismissed me. Yet I envied the Englishman, not because of any woman's preference, but for his ease and his polish.

Queer thoughts for a man to be carrying in his head! The Cherokee would have said I needed a shaking to make me sensible.

De la Rue was in haste again, and the ridges were about fifteen miles of travel. It was the old story of gazing down into deep valleys, of skirting sheer walls of

* "He has a bell," alluding to the rattle. Old men of the Cherokees called him "the Thunderer's necklace."

naked rock, with the clouds settling on the heights above us. I aided Mercy, her hands once more unfastened, but Mrs. Beverly would have none of my help. Arlington attempted to assist both mother and daughter, and for an Old England man did well at mountain climbing. He could help but one at a time, however, and when we reached an unusually disagreeable, although short stretch, Ann Beverly surprized me by taking my arm and telling Arlington to aid her mother.

I urged De la Rue to halt and make camp but he angrily refused.

"The women can't keep up," I insisted.

"*Pardieu!* It'll be very bad for them then, m'sieur," he growled.

They were frontier-bred and used to hardships and, as a matter of fact, were in better condition when we reached the main elevation than the Englishman was. I noticed Arlington was weakening and said as much to him.

He mournfully replied:

"It's worse than any experience I had in the Champlain country. But I'll do better. If you could spell me in helping Mrs. Beverly I could manage better."

"Unfortunately she won't let me."

De la Rue passed along the line and encouraged us.

"The hunters will have meat cooking in the kettles. We'll halt very soon."

But we were nearly finished with the last descent before we came to the fires in a sheltered glade. The hunters had deer meat and some turkeys cooking, and prisoners as well as captors ate ravenously.

Our line of travel would take us down to Stony Creek, a branch of the Kiskiminitas. De la Rue could follow this down to the Allegheny and up the latter to Venango, or could shift his course before reaching the Allegheny and strike direct for Duquesne.

Knowing that the latter point was our destination, I did much worrying that night. I decided that the shorter the journey the more rapidly were my chances of escape whittled down. I ended by resolving to escape before reaching Laurel Hill.

THE morning broke cloudy and the camp slept late. De la Rue appeared to be nervous concerning his back trail and sent half a dozen of his men to scout over the top of the principal ridge to the east. Hunters went out for small game and we were slow in getting our breakfast. It was nearly noon before we finished the last slope and halted on the bank of a tiny stream flowing into Stony Creek.

While we waited for the rear scouts to overtake us De la Rue suddenly evidenced a desire for my company. He came to me and began—

"M'sieur is still anxious to go to Venango?"

"Of course, m'sieur. It is important that I see Sieur de Niverville and warn him what a rascal that Phindry is."

"Then I must send you up the Allegheny with some of my red children. I will set forth in a letter all the facts about you as I know them. I regret my runner has not returned with Sieur de Niverville's endorsement of you."

"It makes no difference. I shall soon be there."

"But it does make a difference, m'sieur. I must split my band and I fear the wretches will fail to rejoin me. While this probably will be my last path I desire to lead all the survivors back."

"My head is dull. Let m'sieur explain, please."

He smiled grimly and replied:

"If my runner should meet us now, with a letter from De Niverville, saying you are all that you claim, I would give you one man, to serve as a road belt. Then I would go on to Duquesne and thence to Tamaque's town and deliver Chabert's belt and talk. Not receiving any word by the runner, I must send five or six men, m'sieur."

"You mean you send me as a prisoner?" I demanded.

"With a strong escort, m'sieur."

"By heavens, but you are simple-minded! "I hotly told him. "You requested me to run away and I refused. It's evident I'm here from choice."

He did not take offense at my plain talk, but smiled and retorted:

"Phindry said you are infatuated with M'm'selle Beverly, that you stay because she is a prisoner. You wouldn't run away when you could because you could not bear to leave her."

"Phindry is a marvelous liar!"

"Doubtless. But now we come to the point where you must leave the young woman. After the parting you might decide you did not care to face Sieur de Niverville."

"You are so suspicious that you tangle yourself up. The Beverlys detest me. I desire their speedy ransom, for they are women. Beyond that I am not interested. I wish for Arlington's speedy ransom, as he has no part in the war. I shall be glad to go to Venango with all the despatch that m'sieur can arrange."

"Excellent. As to that ransom. None is more keen than I, M'sieur, to count it in fat gold. After this trouble is over we could be good friends."

"I am positive of it. Better friends, I believe, than I shall ever be with my countrymen. But why drag Arlington and the women to Duquesne? You must go on down the river to Tamaque's town."

"They shall go along with me. A man does not send ten thousand pounds to Venango, to Montreal or to Quebec, M'sieur. Too much money is being made by our officers. I'm free to say it, as you have cast in with us. Young ensigns, with empty pockets when they joined the army, now by some miracle have thousands of francs. Then, too, the savages must vote again on the Englishman."

My heart chilled.

"You're foolish to let it come to that. If they drop the club your English pounds go up in smoke."

"They will not drop the club. They are satisfied for the time by the death of Fincer, even if they did not burn him. Once in Tamaque's town a word from me will influence him to forbid the burning. But it will not come to that. I have talked to White Canoe and he is anxious to get new cloth and trinkets for his squaw." His voice suddenly became stern, almost vicious, as he concluded by saying, "But regardless of all risk, the Englishman goes where I go. If I do not ransom him no one else shall."

I berated my slow wits for not having arranged some plan of escape before we were clear of the mountains. I wished to talk with Arlington but could not do so at once without arousing the Frenchman's suspicions. Every moment I expected the scouts to come down the slope and to hear the command to press on to where I would be detached from the band. My inability to do anything was most trying.

But as the time passed and the men did not appear, it was De la Rue who got fidgety. Taking one man, he walked a mile up the slope. During his absence I had speech with Arlington and explained our dilemma.

"Your faith in helping us get away seems to be shaken," he grumbled.

"What's done must be done before tomorrow."

"The women will be safe at Duquesne and on the trip to that —— Indian town?"

"Yes."

"Will they burn me?"

"I am positive they will not. Tamaque hasn't decided which way to jump yet, and he'll allow no torture in his village, either of French or English, until he knows which belt he will receive."

"Talk, talk," he mumbled. "Have you any plan to rescue those poor women?"

"Not yet. My head is empty."

"——! Then fill your head, sir!" he snarled. "You've made them believe you would at least make an attempt. They've accepted you as a man who's been bought, but who has enough decency left to pity their sex and condition. It's for you to keep your word."

"I intend to make every effort to keep my word. It's easy for you to leave all the planning to another man. Be patient for a bit. It's out of the question to attempt anything in the daytime. We

shall move down to the creek as soon as the scouts come in. We can try nothing until night. The Cherokee is with the scouts. I need his help."

"Then I wish they were all stuck fast in —— and could never come in!"

This was a wholesome sentiment and I was willing to throw the Frenchman in for good measure. I prayed the scouts would not show up, but how I needed the cool, clear head of the Cherokee!

De la Rue returned, and I could see he was worried. He asked me whether I believed any of Forbes' scouts were so far west and could have fallen on his men. I assured him this would not have happened as Forbes' scouts would follow the Braddock road. He sent Black Feather up the ridge to learn the cause of the delay, and vowed he would go on with only a few of his men if the scouts failed to show up soon. I argued against this, saying the savages with us would not go to Duquesne without their friends. Had Bloody-Mouth been with us I should have urged him to set out at once. Then came the consoling thought that the Cherokee by some ruse was holding the scouts from overtaking us.

The hours passed and I was wishing the time away, with the sun half across the western sky, when a faint cry sounded up the slope. The Frenchman ordered us to be ready to march and walked toward the foot of the ridge. Bloody-Mouth came bounding down the last declivity alone. My heart beat rapidly as I wondered whether by some miracle he had exterminated his companions. The Indians in camp were alarmed and ran to meet my friend. Bloody-Mouth trotted to us, refusing to speak until he halted in the camp circle. Then he announced:

"They say the ghost of the white man follows us far. They say the ghost rolled a rock on Big Man's legs and spoiled them."

He rapidly repeated this to me in Cherokee and continued:

"The white man's ghost was helped by a strong rock medicine. Big Man is very cunning in high places. But the ghost dragged clouds over the mountains and made the path dark. The Thunderers made a loud noise and shook the mountains and loosened a rock. The rock rolled down the path and hurt Big Man's legs."

De la Rue cursed volubly in French and demanded to know the whereabouts of Big Man. Bloody-Mouth explained:

"Two men carry him on poles, He is very big and heavy. They take turns. It will be dark before they come here."

"That settles it!" muttered De la Rue. "We're here for the night! Would that the fool had been killed! Then they'd been quick enough to leave this cursed country." To the savages he said. "The ghost medicine is not strong enough to kill our brother. Make a soft bed of boughs. Heat water in a kettle. Cook meat and make a good broth. Big Man is very strong and brave. He laughs at the ghost. We will get him to Fort Duquesne and save his legs."

TO BE CONTINUED

LOOKING ABOUT

IT MAY be that some of you think our asking so often for your suggestions on the making and shaping of our magazine is only an empty performance. Here is exactly what is done in the office:

First, there are your letters that come in because of no specific request made to you but merely as a result of the general reader interest in our magazine, of the friendly, active, we-are-part-of-*Adventure* feeling that has grown up through the years. Those letters are read word for word. One editor is especially assigned to the duty of keeping an exact card-index record of every single comment on any of our writers or any of their stories, even a mention of such, favorable or unfavorable. Every six months he makes out a carefully tabulated, detailed report, ranking our whole list of authors on the basis of our readers' "votes." Every member of the staff pores over that report.

Allowance must be made for the number of times an author appears during the six months' period covered, for serials or novelettes *versus* shorts, and so on. But the ranking of authors from that summary of readers' votes becomes at once a guide in the buying of manuscripts during the next six months. Also it brings about a new assessment of our writers as to their relative values to this particular magazine and consequently as to the rate of payment each should have.

General comments on other phases and features of our magazine are not card-indexed. The multiplicity and variety of points commented upon, from typographical details to the general policy of the magazine, make this impracticable. But it is the duty of the editor in charge to note down any pronounced amount of comment on any one point and, if comment continues heavy, to begin tabulating "votes" on that point, meanwhile of course calling the attention of the rest of us to the point on trial.

Comments on any particular department—"Camp-Fire," "Ask Adventure," information services, "Travel," "Straight Goods," "Books," "Old Songs," "Lost Trails," "Trail Ahead," "Looking About"—are turned over to the editor in charge of that department, to be read, summarized, filed or used in his department.

Any reader's letter claiming one of our authors has been inaccurate or incorrect in the use of any of the fact material in his fiction, or any of ourselves or our service editors in anything printed in the magazine, gets particular attention. If a final verdict on the claim, for or against, can not be authoritatively given in the office, the letter is mailed or turned over to the author or editor involved and it's up to him either to confess error or to convince the reader the criticism was not soundly taken.

The results in this case are apparent. *Adventure* prides itself on an earned reputation for accuracy and reliability in the local color, setting and atmosphere of its stories, in all fact material, historical or otherwise, used in its fiction. It wasn't the editors who earned that reputation for our magazine. It was the readers who earned it. And they did it by the method above. No set of editors in the world could be final authority on all the subjects and places covered, but, whatever the subject, there are always at least a few among our readers who are very competent authorities. Writers and editors have learned that it is not healthy to come before *Adventure's* audience with fact material that isn't bullet-proof. None of us is infallible, but when we slip we acknowledge it frankly in type so that there can be no uncorrected misinformation laid before our readers.

Another result is interesting topics, investigations and discussions for Camp-Fire. Will older readers ever forget the argument royal that arose among Camp-Fire over Talbot Mundy's interpretation of the character of Julius Cæsar in the

Tros stories? Had to stop it finally because it wasn't leaving space for much else, but I think most of us learned more about Julius Cæsar than we had ever known before. We're still getting occasional requests to have the contributions to that argument issued in book form. Well, maybe we can some day.

Of such results as the above you will be finding plenty of proof in the magazine as you go along, but another result is not so obvious. Nearly all the comments and criticisms are in friendly spirit and the replies are in kind. Therefore in hundreds and hundreds of cases real personal friendships have grown up between readers and writers, or among readers, and the real fellowship of Camp-Fire is very appreciably promoted.

All the foregoing applies to general letters from readers. Your letters not read? All of them are read. At the top of some will be penciled three or four names—authors or editors—which means that the owner of each name must see that letter.

As to opinions on specific points, specifically asked for. Well, take the request for readers' suggestions and advice on the new form of our magazine.

The response from readers in this case has been splendid. Our summary of your suggestions has now been put into final and complete form. Not only has every one of the active editorial staff studied it thoroughly but carbon copies have been passed on to each of the following for his equally careful study—the publisher, the assistant publisher, the heads of the Circulation and the Promotion Departments.

We're going to give you an exact copy of that report in full. With one exception. Some of the information you have given us is much too valuable and important to broadcast for the benefit of other publishers. Accordingly in at least one place we're going to scramble the report a little, but any such places, and the nature of the scrambling, will be indicated for your benefit. Other publishers of course get an occasional formal referendum from readers, get questions for specific answer. No other magazine gets from its readers anything like such a response of voluntary, independent opinions and suggestions as *Adventure's* readers give to it. We do not see why we should hand over to other magazines all of the valuable information thus received, information meant for us, not for them.

I think we can give you the report in "Camp-Fire" of the issue following this one. If not, as soon as it can be done.

And to the very sincere thanks of my own department I am to add those of all the other departments cooperating in making *Adventure* a magazine that meets the desires of the majority of its readers as closely as is humanly possible to do.

Oh yes, we really want your suggestions and criticisms! And we really read and consider them when we get them. If you don't like this or that in the magazine, *tell us so.* We can't please everybody on every point, but we can please the majority and so far as it's at all possible we naturally want to do just that.

Lots of people never write to any magazine about anything. But this is different. *Adventure* isn't just a magazine. It's Camp-Fire, readers, writers and editors working together to make for themselves the best magazine and clearing-house of ideas and information that they can, and to have as good and friendly a time as possible while they're doing it. Do your part. Don't just take from the rest of us without contributing your share in return. There's always a bit of time now and then when a letter or post-card and a few marks with pen, pencil or typewriter can send in a criticism or suggestion that may bear good fruit for all who gather around the Fire. You're not writing to a magazine—you're writing to *Adventure.*—A. S. H.

The Camp-Fire

A free-to-all Meeting-Place *for* Readers, Writers *and* Adventurers

OUR Camp-Fire came into being May 5, 1912, with our June issue, and since then its fire has never died down. Many have gathered about it and they are of all classes and degrees, high and low, rich and poor, adventurers and stay-at-homes, and from all parts of the earth. Some whose voices we used to know have taken the Long Trail and are heard no more, but they are still memories among us, and new voices are heard, and welcomed.

We are drawn together by a common liking for the strong, clean things of out-of-doors, for word from the earth's far places, for man in action instead of caged by circumstance. The spirit *of adventure lives in all men; the rest is chance.*

But something besides a common interest holds us together. Somehow a real comradeship has grown up among us. Men can not thus meet and talk together without growing into friendlier relations; many a time does one of us come to the rest for facts and guidance; many a close personal friendship has our Camp-Fire built up between two men who had never met; often has it proved an open sesame between strangers in a far land.

Perhaps our Camp-Fire is even a little more. Perhaps it is a bit of leaven working gently among those of different station toward the fuller and more human understanding and sympathy that will some day bring to man the real democracy and brotherhood he seeks. Few indeed are the agencies that bring together on a friendly footing so many and such great extremes as here. And we are numbered by the hundred thousand now.

If you are come to our Camp-Fire for the first time and find you like the things we like, join us and find yourself very welcome. There is no obligation except ordinary manliness, no forms or ceremonies, no dues, no officers, no anything except men and women gathered for interest and friendliness. Your desire to join makes you a member.

ANOTHER comrade comes forward with a theory as to the Lost Atlantis. As between village fools and scientists, well, there's frequently something to be said on both sides of the question.

Fayette, Missouri.

The many letters regarding the Lost Atlantis are very interesting and I would like to contribute a theory of my own. I am not a scientist, so my reasoning is on the order of the village fool who set out looking for the lost horse with the idea of "where would I go if I was a stray horse," so I ask: Where is the likeliest place to look for signs of a flood of such an extent as to give a lasting impression on all the surrounding peoples? Civilization began in the eastern part of the Mediterranean basin and, if Atlantis was an island in the inland sea, its destruction was part of the flooding of the Mediterranean basin. However, I agree with Mr. R. E. Briggs that the flooding of the Mediterranean through the slowly rising Atlantic through the Strait would be too slow to account for the suddenness of the catastrophe. The flood must have come from the north.

It is agreed that the Black, Caspian and Aral seas were connected in one vast sea extending far north before the piercing of the mountain wall at the Bosphorous. The Aral is now 188 feet above the level of the Mediterranean, so the level of that northern sea must have been very much higher. On the map in Wells' "History of the World" it is shown draining through marshes to the Baltic as the watershed at the lowest part is about 600 feet, so it must be assumed it was at least that much higher than the present level. The mountain ridge at the present place of the Bosphorus is very narrow. My theory is that the water in the northern sea rose from the melting of the ice-cap and began overflowing the narrow barrier and flowing through the Aegean valley to slowly raise the level of the Mediterranean lake.

The Mediterranean basin is highly volcanic and at that time was probably much more so. On the ridge separating the eastern and western basins are now three volcanoes in almost straight line; Vesuvius, Stromboli and Etna. There may have been many more that are now submerged. In the Aegean is Santorin, which is submerged but still shows activity. As the water rose, the volcanic activity increased, and as the burning mountains and lake probably were worshiped as gods or the abode of gods, the rising water and eruptions would be believed to be warnings of the gods as told in the stories. It may be that some wise man, seeing that waters steadily rose and filled low-lying land and valleys, would build some craft on a high place and keep a small nucleus of domesticated animals by "a pair of each."

When at last the water found its way into the volcanoes they exploded, the resulting earthquake toppled over and split the narrow mountain ridge holding back the northern sea, the water rushed down the Aegean valley, the earthquake waves and rising water would blot out Atlantis. That the flood was of volcanic nature is evident from the account of the same.

In modern times we have a small replica in the eruption of Krakatoa in 1883. It was only a small volcano but it shows what happens when water finds its way to the molten lava. There we have everything that the old stories tell of flood and Atlantis—sudden darkness for several days, torrential rains and flood waves that drowned 40,000 people and circled the globe. For several years after the sunsets were glowing from the masses of dust and gases thrown up by the volcano. That is duplicated by the Bible story of the rainbow being set in the heavens as a sign of no more floods. The dust from the Mediterranean volcanoes would have been immeasurably greater than that from Krakatoa, and the effect on the heavens in comparison. It is plain that the rainbow has been made to take the place of some other phenomenon by later tellers of the story. It is easy to imagine some gray-bearded survivor telling the story to a gathering in the highlands of Armenia. Pointing to Ararat he would say "Mountains as high as yonder peak were submerged and the glories of the skies as the gods ascended surpassed the colors of the rainbow."

This is my idea of Atlantis and the flood. I can only refer to my first statement about the village fool. You know he found the horse.—A. W. CEDERSTROM.

FROM Arthur O. Friel something about the real facts and events upon which is based his novelette in this issue:

Like some other yarns of mine, this story of "Salt" rests on a foundation of fact. Between the town of Urbana and the Rio Meta, on the western shore of the Orinoco, used to be a real rustlers' row, inhabited by cattle thieves who preyed on the herds of the adjacent *sabana* of Apure; a rough and ready crowd for whom we Northerners might feel very little sympathy, but toward whom we must permit *Sixto Scott*, himself a somewhat case-hardened resident of a lawless region, to express a characteristic tolerance. This outfit was finally rounded up and almost exterminated by the fighting governor of Apure—a personal acquaintance of mine who later became governor of the more important State of Bolivar. Before this catastrophe, however, the little drama of the word "*sal*" was played to its conclusion.

Though the names used here are fictitious, there was an actual man of the *Diablo Caballo* type, and another who tricked him exactly as my *Esteban* does. The ambush, the roasting of the calf, the tendering of the meat, the double use of the word *sal*, took place exactly as described and brought the same result. The desperado was, however, killed on the spot; then tied to the tail of his horse and dragged off into the *sabana*, where both man and horse disappeared for good. Also the real *Esteban*, instead of dying from natural causes, was one of

those shot later on by the punitive expedition of the governor. A few years later I was told the story by one of my paddlers, a veteran riverman, while I and my crew were eating lunch at the deserted *sitio* where it all had taken place.—A. O. F.

DON'T forget that the old "Camp-Fire" sentiment against hearing any letter not signed with the writer's full name is being enforced rigidly. Another member of the staff now goes over all letters intended for "Camp-Fire" and the first step is to discard every letter whose writer requests that only initials, or some other name, be published with it. Such letters never even reach my hands. The very few obvious exceptions, such as officers of the law whose official duties might suffer from the publishing of their names, form so comparatively small a percentage that we needn't worry about them.

Our Camp-Fire is a place for openness and frankness, not for anonymous voices.

IT READS like fiction, the story of the boy John Jewitt, but it is solid history. The most imaginative of fiction writers would find no need to add to the tale any elements of thrilling, sensational, even improbable adventure. Yet it really happened and its facts should be added to our knowledge of our country's history. The following letter from Miss Laut establishes its authenticity:

Wassaic, New York

Jewitt's Log unfortunately came out in its first edition in 1808, when Lewis and Clark's explorations were scarcely known and not in the least recognized as of international importance, except by such far-sighted men as Astor. For this reason it sank into utter oblivion before it could be authenticated, though a second small edition came out in 1812. Very few copies exist today outside historical libraries of first rank and the shelves of rare-book collectors. Not ten copies have been for sale to collectors in twenty years. It is now one of the rare birds among Western Americana of early date.

Meanwhile, the voyages of Cook, Vancouver, Meares, Barclay, Gray came pouring out on the world down to 1892 and the centennial of Lewis and Clark in 1906 and the growth of a great Pacific Coast Empire revived search for every scrap of early Pacific history. Spanish archives neglected for a hundred years were ransacked for Pacific Coast historical collections and scraps and full accounts became available on the voyages of Heceta, of Estevan, of Martinez, of Don Quadra and many others, as well as contemporary official maps.

These contemporary records proved every date and every reference in the marooned boy's Ship Log. The whole dramatic adventurous story of the race to grasp the Pacific Coast by three great powers —England, Spain and the United States—merged like the old man from the Sea of the Past with strange, new, startling perspective. If Drake's discoveries had been followed up by England, as Professor Morrison of Harvard pointed out in the dedication of the magnificent shaft at the mouth of the Columbia to Astor in 1926, New England might have been Nova Albion, which Drake named his landfall on the Pacific in the days of Queen Elizabeth, and New York might have been San Francisco and Boston Seattle, and Baltimore Astoria, for where the Atlantic climate repelled, the Pacific climate lured; but the North Star had not yet risen in the ascendancy of Destiny to lure West and Northwest and the great discovery slept on unrecognized.

Jewitt's Log is one of the most thrilling untold histories in American exploration and it preceded both Lewis and Clark by two years and the Astor tragedy by eight years. In fact, the escaping boy just missed connection with Lewis and Clark by two weeks, as the letter, found by his rescuer and nailed to a tree by Lewis and Clark, proves.

Every place named by Jewitt can now be located, every tribe, every raid, every footstep in the years of his terrible slavery.

What became of the boy himself, except that he settled in Connecticut and left descendants, remains unknown, though it may come out any day.

There is a great difference in the spelling of the Indian names in all the voyages. This is easily explained. As a universal language, the prairie tribes used the manual sign language. As a universal language, the coast tribes used a jargon of English, Indian, Spanish and Russian called by the word Chinook after a coast tribe; but the Chinook jargon, which is still in use and of which vocabularies exist, was *not* the true Chinook. True Chinook is a lost language. Jewitt, being an adopted Indian, used the true Chinook. The sea captains and fur-traders used the jargon Chinook. Hence we have such varieites as:

(1) Maquinna, Maquina, Maquilla (Spanish), Maquinah.

(2) Nootka, Neu-wee-ta, Nuka, Nutka.

(3) Wincanish, Wicannish, Wincannish.

(4) Tootoosh, Toos, Toosh, Toot-toosh-ee-ee.

And so with all names; but the identity of the personage can be proved by the exact dates and locale.

Jewitt's Log can now be checked up as true by twenty-four different voyages.

Places named by him still dot Puget Sound, Vancouver Island and the State of Washington. Tootoosh Island is named after the famous scoundrel who was the chief killer.

Only two mysteries remain to be cleared up on his captivity.

Who was his little bride, who saved his life, daughter of Upquesta? What became of his little Indian son whom he left in Maquina's care?

To the first question there is no answer yet, though it has been asked of every living authority, white and Indian, on Chinook life.

It was the same chief, south of Puget Sound, who acted as a middleman between Toosh's Fraser River murderers and the Lower Columbia Indians of Oregon.

As to what became of his Indian son and bride, there are two guesses, either of which may be right.

When Paul Kane, the artist, came wandering to the Pacific in the 1840's, he met a fair Indian chief, called Yellow-cum, who said his father had been the only white man that escaped a terrible massacre at Nootka; and Kane thought the man must be the escaped pilot of Astor's ship the *Tonquin*. But Astor's pilot was a well-known and full-blooded Indian named Chehalis, after whom a town in Washington is named. On the other hand, there was another freckled-faced chief who lived for years in behind Astoria and gave his name to a little lake—Cullaby (I am not dead sure of the modern spelling of this name)—who died about fifty years ago. He always said his father had been a boy who escaped a terrible massacre at Nootka, whose life had been spared because he was a worker in iron and could mend the guns captured from white men, and forge knives and whale harpoons from the iron and copper torn from wrecked traders' vessels, and knew how to use the anvil and reef sails and cast the great fluked iron anchors. Which legend is true it is impossible to say unless some descendant of Jewitt's appears with the true story. There is one old Umatilla chief, age 102, but blind and infirm, from whom the Indian Department might ascertain if any legends of Jewitt still persist. He is the last of that generation and, considering his age, there is no time to be lost. He spoke, through a translator, on the Columbia River Expedition of 1926, but was too overcome by the effort to be further questioned before being returned to the Reserve. In fact, almost fainted. I have his picture.—Agnes C. Laut.

TOWARD the latter part of 1925 our magazine instituted the *Adventure* Prize for Poetry, one hundred dollars to be given for the best poem published by our magazine during each year. Since so much of 1925 had already passed, the first award was to cover the period ending with our last December, 1926, issue.

Our prize is unlike any other ever awarded for poetry, so far as we know, for the selection of the winning poem is not made according to the usual tests and standards. Here are the conditions as originally set forth not only in our pages but in those of the various magazines devoted to the interests of writers or to poetry itself:

We base our standard of selection upon the principle that the primary appeal of poetry must be to the emotions, not to the intellect; that the essential test of a poem's art is the extent to which it stirs the emotions; that the artistry of technique is of value only in so far as it renders the emotional appeal more effective; that in too much of our present-day verse it is made an end in itself.

A certain few poems live on in the hearts of men. Some of these are crude, some perfect in expression. Some of the folk who make them part of their lives are crude, some keyed to the finest shadings. Each one of these poems lives because it has reached hearts, some despite lack of technique, some by its aid. But even the crudest of those few do live while countless perfect expressions fall cold and die. We think no man can draw the line at which imperfect technique outweighs an inherent emotional appeal, but the latter is infinitely the greater value of the two, and in judging poetry we shall make it our first and chief test.

Poems must fall within *Adventure's* general field, but that field is a very wide one. We have no particular leaning toward gore; on the other hand, a very strong aversion for the trivialities of an ingrowing civilization.

The tender passion is not for our pages. Nor the morbid or unclean, nor a too plain examination of one's psychological insides. Realism if you like, but not the realism of life's sewers.

We are particularly open to ballads of our country and of Canada.

At the end of each year we shall give the *Adventure* Prize for Poetry, one hundred dollars, for the best poem published by us during the year.

There is also another difference, arising more or less automatically from the conditions of the competition—there is no committee of noted people to do the choosing. Our own staff does it, with whatever voluntary assistance our readers have given us in the way of response to the various poems. In this case the staff did the awarding by the simple process of finding out which poem of the past sixteen months had left the most vivid and lasting impression upon our minds, with due allowance for the fact that the original impressions had been made at different times.

That method, considering the standards and tests in accordance with which the award is made, seems essentially as logical as any—provided you grant honest impartiality on our part. (It might be

mentioned that the first winner of the prize is a woman whom none of us has ever seen, whom none of us know except through office correspondence and of whom none of us had ever heard until her successful poem came in to us through the mail.) But there is much to be desired as to reader participation in the awarding. A reader's comment is ordinarily made at the time a poem appears and is therefore not a gauge as to the permanence of the impression made by the poem. A general reader vote at the end of the year would hardly be the solution. Not all who voted would have read all the poems, and the difficulty in allowing for the varying remoteness of the dates of publication would be manifolded. A committee of readers? How and by whom would they be appointed? If any of you can work out a satisfactory plan, please let us know, for we of the staff would be more than glad to have you join or supersede us as judges.

In awarding the *Adventure* Prize for Poetry for 1926 our task was made easier by the fact that, when we applied to ourselves the test of which poem had made the strongest and most lasting impression, five of the six of us had no doubt or hesitation in naming the same poem. The sixth named "Colenso's Mistress," by Herbert S. Gorman.

The 1926 prize goes to Helen von Kolnitz Hyer for her poem, "The Loading Shed," in our February 10, 1926, issue.

One of the most pleasing angles on this award is that Mrs. Hyer is by no means a "professional" poet. She has been a statistician and is now Associate Curator of education in the Kent Scientific Museum at Grand Rapids. She collects birds' eggs, goes on field trips with her naturalist husband, and is the mother of two young daughters.

The 1927 competition opened with our January 1, 1927, issue, under the same conditions with the right reserved to change the method of awarding in accordance with suggestions from readers.

We are aware that, in this country at least, our basis of selection will in the eyes of some people be considered crude, naive, iconoclastic, revolutionary. Perhaps. We answer that the usual basis of selection in judging poetry has become badly warped in the direction of attaching entirely too much attention to technique and entirely too little attention to the question of the degree to which poetry fulfils its elementary and fundamental office of reaching the emotions. And by reaching the emotions we mean reaching the emotions, not mere stirring of sensibilities or more or less decadent mental reactions.

A. S. H.

FOLLOWING Camp-Fire custom, we herewith present a sketch of Andrew A. Caffrey so that our new readers may know more about this member of our writers' brigade.

He had always wanted to write, but flying got there first. That's probably why we have been seeing stories by him only recently. His first in *Adventure* was "Kokomo Birds" in our October 8th issue, but he had appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post* more than a year before that.

How does a person who wants to be a writer happen to get into the flying game? It seems to be largely a matter of chance.

Andrew Caffrey was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Now he lives in California. He dallied by the roadside of education, and after long preparations spent just three days in college—the University of Niagara, to be exact. For young Caffrey wanted to write and couldn't figure why a writer should have an education anyway.

So he went West, and managed to cover a good bit of our broad land in a few years. He worked as wheat harvester, as mechanic, as carpenter, in any capacity he could, from Kansas to Calgary. After he was snow-bound and nearly frozen on the plains of Alberta, at 36 below zero, he decided to go to sunny California. While he was there America entered the war and Caffrey entered the army.

He piloted a Nieuport in France, and since the war has been with the air mail and with the Army air service in civilian capacity. And what all his own ambition and peculiar idea of education failed to do for him flying has done. He has become a writer. He used to write poems in the *Aerial Age*, and in *U. S. Air Service*, the official Army and Navy magazine, appeared the first round-trip coast-to-coast aerial log—real stuff written every minute and every foot on the wing. Then he began to write the stories that you know. After all, it doesn't matter how a would-be writer gets into the flying game as long as an actual writer comes out of it.

ASK *Adventure*

For *free information* and *services* you can't get elsewhere

Questions and Answers

Accurate Information on Outdoor Life and Activities Everywhere

Books you can Believe

Verdicts by Experts on the Authenticity of Current Non-Fiction

Straight Goods

Reports on Tests by Our Experts of Outdoor Equipment and Commodities

Adventure's Travel Association

A Service Organization with Stations and Experts all over the World

Old Songs that Men have Sung

Collecting and Discussing Old Songs still Living among the People

Tropical Trees

TREES that eat men alive may or may not exist, but there are plenty scattered about the world that have habits which are almost as peculiar.

Request:—"Can you please tell me—

1. Is there a tree which devours animals or even men?
2. If so, where?
3. What books can I get to obtain correct information concerning it, and also of the natives living in its vicinity?"—ELSIE BLOME, Lincoln Park, N. J.

Reply, by Mr. Barbour:—Yours is a most unusual question.

I have never heard of such a tree, and consider it impossible that it exists.

What I think you have in mind is the class of flowers, called Venus' fly trap, etc., which entrap insects either by closing a lid or entangling them in sticky hairs, and then secrete juices which dissolve and digest them. I have heard tales of similar flowers large enough to catch small birds, such as humming-birds, but do not believe the rumors are authentic.

On the subject of unusual trees, I might mention the "cow" or "milk" tree of South America, akin to the rubber tree, whose bark secretes a milky juice which has been used as a substitute for milk in coffee. There are also a number of trees and palms, etc., called "traveler's" tree, etc., which yield water good to drink. I have myself quenched my thirst in that manner.

There is another tree called the rain tree, whose leaves catch showers during the day, and then fold up at night in such a manner that water drips from the leaves.

Another class of tree, of the *Family Euphorbiaceæ*, are known as poison trees, because their juice is extremely poisonous and corrosive. Of some of these there are old tales that they poisoned travelers who slept in their shade. One tree of this family, *Hippomane manchinele*, common along the shores of the West Indies, has a very poisonous fruit. A colonial writer, Moreau de St. Mery, records in his history of Santo Domingo that the manchineel trees on the Island of Tortuga were all cut down by royal edict, because the land crabs ate the fruits and then the negro slaves ate the crabs and were poisoned.

The subject of queer and unusual tropical trees is a very large one, too large to be elaborated upon in a letter.

St. Lawrence

FROM the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes by water. The comment on the difference between salt and fresh water navigating is worth noting.

Request:—"Is there any passage by which to take a sailing vessel of sixty-five-foot length and ten feet deck to keel, from the Atlantic Ocean through to Detroit, Michigan, by way of St. Lawrence River? Or any other route to get from the ocean to the Great Lakes?

I would appreciate any other information you have on hand as to courses, charts, shoals, etc., if it is possible to make the voyage."—STANLEY NELIUS, Patagonia, Arizona.

Reply, by Mr. Gardner:—1. Of course you can bring your boat through the St. Lawrence to Detroit. Much larger boats than yours use that route. But I would not try it by sail power alone. Get yourself a good gas engine as an auxiliary, or you will have a mighty slow time making it through the locks, also bucking the current of the Detroit River.

What is your tonnage? The law states that no vessel of ten gross tons or over shall navigate any of the improved channels under sail power alone.

2. Charts of the St. Lawrence, Lake Ontario, Lake Erie and the lower Detroit River may be had from the Great Lakes Survey Office, Detroit, Mich. The cost is small; write them for their price list.

These charts will give you your true courses; for the compass course apply Variation, Deviation, and Heeling-error. Variation will be shown for locality on chart compass rose. For Deviation, check your compass on river ranges with the Deviation tables or use the Pelorus. For Heeling-error use the Clinometer.

This may all be unnecessary to you perhaps you are well up on it, but, this is the way we do it on the Great Lakes, quite different from salt water methods, you will find all shoal water, etc. prominently marked on your charts.

Egypt

MANY mummies remain to be discovered, but you are likely to encounter difficulties when you attempt to take home your discovery.

Request:—"1. Are there any instances where mummies were prepared for burial without removing the vital organs or mutilating the body?

2. Could you give the names of one or two old kings whose mummies have not yet been found, any pertinent facts about them, their special emblems, etc.?

3. Can mummies, tomb furnishings, etc., be brought out of Egypt?"—HILRA MORRISON, Dover, N. H.

Reply, by Dr. Neville Whymant: 1. In Ancient Egypt, there were quite a number of experiments made in preserving the body as it was in life. This proved unsatisfactory, however, as in the soft parts (e. g. the intestines), there were many folds which were not reached by the preservative, and this brought about decay. Moreover, the Egyptians, like the Chinese, invested the viscera with mystic powers. A natural consequence of the belief in the "queer" nature of these parts was their preservation apart in special jars ranged round the body in the vault. For complete details see "Egyptian Magic," and "The Book of the Dead; The Papyrus of Ani," both by Sir E. A. Wallis Budge.

2. Many mummies still remain to be discovered. It was in trying to locate some of these that Mr. Howard Carter stumbled across that of Tut-ankh-amen. Not every king had a special emblem; all had of course a special ideographic compound enclosed in a cartouche by which the name could be read, but in the sense that the symbol of RA was the sun, and that of HORUS a certain bird, a large number of kings had no emblem at all.

3. Mummies, tomb-turnishings and in fact all things found in tombs within the jurisdiction of the modern Egyptian government, can not be removed from the country until permission has been

granted by that government. It may be remembered that many of the treasures found in the vault of Tut-ankh-amen were denied to Mr. Carter and his chief, the late Lord Carnarvon, and that a somewhat bitter quarrel was thus set up between the peer, who had put up all the money for ten years' excavation, and the Egyptian government. At present the findings are divided between the Egyptian Museum in Cairo and the British Museum in London.

Full information is available on all the points you raise in the series of works by Sir E. A. Wallis Budge, called "Books on Egypt and Chaldea." These may be found in any good reference library.

Travel Rations

TWO lists of foods, one light and one heavy, with instruction for their use in wilderness camping, are given below. The whole article has been printed in monograph form and may be obtained on request from the author, Mr. Horace Kephart, who is our new expert on camp cooking and whose address will be found among those of the other experts on following pages. Mr. Kephart's work along this line is well known to all experienced campers.

ASSUMING that we go through wild country where no supplies can be purchased, and that the means of transportation require the party to go light, then we must figure on getting the most actual food value for the least bulk and weight.

The simplest, lightest and most compact ration that has been known to keep an expedition going for a long time, in good health, was probably the one used by Peary in his arctic travels. The day's allowance for each man was one pound of pemmican, one pound of hardtack, four ounces of condensed milk and half an ounce of compressed tea: a total of two and one-fourth pounds of food, besides the weight of the tin containers. Pemmican is made of selected lean beef, dried, pulverized, then mixed with half its weight of beef fat, a little sugar and a few raisins. It is indispensable for arctic journeys; but suitable only for winter travel, owing to its high proportion of fat.

Peary's ration was extremely monotonous, of necessity. Whenever a traveler can get a varied diet he should have it.

Commercial canned meats, fish and fowl are unwholesome for steady diet. No one will stick to "bully beef" and "goldfish" if he can help it. Bacon is the wilderness traveler's standby; but we don't want it oftener than once a day. Fresh meat for at least one meal a day should be provided if possible, either by purchase or by gun and rod.

Canned fruits and vegetables are good; but they are very heavy and bulky for their food value, except baked beans. Canned tomatoes, however, have special value as corrective of a too starchy or fatty diet, and for the vitamins they contain. They also help the cook in varying the menu.

Canned milk and butter are in a class by themselves. They are highly concentrated foods, palatable and wholesome, and they are invaluable in cooking. They more than pay their freight.

Dried egg, since fresh eggs can not be carried, is well worth taking. One pound equals four dozen fresh eggs. It is good scrambled or in omelets, but its chief merit is as an adjunct in cooking. With milk, butter and eggs, the cook has almost unlimited possibilities in varying the camp menu.

Potatoes and onions are bulky, but there are no satisfactory substitutes for them. On all but short trips they should be included, whenever possible. Dehydrated vegetables help stews.

Bread molds after three days. Hardtack is unpalatable. Other crackers are far too bulky. Do your own baking, after the first two or three days. Rice, oatmeal and potatoes help conserve the bread component of the ration.

Below are two ration lists: the first, a very simple and light allowance, for one going on a short trip and paring his equipment to the bone, as in mountaineering; the other, more liberal, allowing much variety in meals, and suitable for a journey of any duration.

It will be noticed that the chief difference between a light ration and a heavy one is in the fact that the heavy includes vegetables.

RATION LISTS.

LIGHT:

One Man, Three Days.

	lbs.	oz.
Bread, 3 loaves (12-oz.)	2	4
Oatmeal or Rice	–	8
Evaporated Milk, 3 small cans (7-oz.)	1	5
Butter, in pry-up tin	–	10
Fresh Meat	1	–
Bacon	–	8
Boiled Ham	–	8
Raisins	–	4
Prunes, Dried Apricots or Lemons	–	8
Sugar	–	8
Coffee, ground	–	4
Tea	–	1
Salt, Pepper	–	2
	8	6

This includes weight of the tins, the butter being 8 oz. net and the milk 18 oz. It provides plenty of nourishment for a man at hard outdoor work, without procuring anything by the way except the fresh meat. On trips where no hunting or fishing can be done, add more bacon or ham in lieu of the fresh meat, or substitute canned baked beans, corned beef, or what you like. The net weight of the ration is 2¾ lbs. per man per day.

On longer trips, flour and potatoes take the place of ready-baked bread. Add baking-powder. Corn

meal can be substituted for part of the flour. Add dried egg to go in flapjacks, etc.

HEAVY:

Two Men, Two Weeks.

	lbs.	oz.
Bread (for first two or three days)	4	—
Flour	16	—
Corn Meal	4	—
Baking-Powder, in tin	—	8
Cereal	4	—
Potatoes, ½ bushel	30	—
Onions, ½ peck	4	—
Dried Beans	2	—
Tomatoes, 2 cans	4	—
Fresh Meat (Game, Fish)	20	—
Bacon, 1 large side	8	—
Butter, in tins	4	12
Milk, 2 doz. small cans	10	8
Dried Egg, 1 lb. in tin	1	4
Crisco or Lard, 2 lbs. in tin	2	4
Dried Fruits, assorted	4	—
Jam, in tins	3	8
Sugar	4	—
Coffee	2	—
Tea	—	4
Salt, Pepper	1	—
	130 lbs.	

Subtracting the weight of tins, this gives a ration of 4½ lbs. net per man per day. It provides an ample diet, as varied as practicable for an expedition in wild country. It will serve as a basis on which to compute food lists for any number of men, over any period.

ALTHOUGH it is in Oriental study that Dr. Neville Whymant has particularly distinguished himself—he is the author of the first Mongolian grammar ever to be printed in English, and has been lecturer and assistant in Chinese and Japanese at London and Oxford—his work as a scholar and student of ethnology in general has been notable. Says the Bangkok *Times* in part, "Dr. Neville Whymant, who is a professor of Oriental classics in a Tokyo university, has distinguished himself in fields of anthropological and ethnological research." Dr. Whymant is also a member of the Royal Asiatic Society and of the Polynesian Society and has contributed to the leading British reviews. We are glad to be able to add him to the "Ask Adventure" staff. The subjects which he will cover are listed among the others on the following pages—note that seven new experts have been added since the list was last printed—and his first reply to an inquirer is printed above. Other experts of his caliber are needed by "Ask Adventure." We will gladly discuss the details of the work with any one. Address Joseph Cox, care of *Adventure*.

Our Experts—They have been chosen by us not only for their knowledge and experience but with an eye to their integrity and reliability. We have emphatically assured each of them that his advice or information is not to be affected in any way by whether a commodity is or is not advertised in this magazine.

They will in all cases answer to the best of their ability, using their own discretion in all matters pertaining to their sections, subject only to our general rules for "Ask Adventure," but neither they nor the magazine assume any responsibility beyond the moral one of trying to do the best that is possible.

1. **Service**—It is free to anybody, provided self-addressed envelop and *full* postage, *not attached*, are enclosed. Correspondents writing to or from foreign countries will please enclose International Reply Coupons, purchasable at any post-office, and exchangeable for stamps of any country in the International Postal Union. Be sure that the issuing office stamps the coupon in the left-hand circle.
2. **Where to Send**—Send each question direct to the expert in charge of the particular section whose field covers it. He will reply by mail. Do NOT send questions to this magazine. All questions on actual travel should be addressed to "Adventure's Travel Association," care *Adventure*, not to this department. All questions, however, on equipment (except ordinary travel equipment) should be addressed to this department, not to "Straight Goods."
3. **Extent of Service**—No reply will be made to requests for partners, for financial backing, or for chances to join expeditions. "Ask Adventure" covers business and work opportunities, but only if they are outdoor activities, and only in the way of general data and advice. It is in no sense an employment bureau.
4. **Be Definite**—Explain your case sufficiently to guide the expert you question.

Salt and Fresh Water Fishing *Fishing-tackle and equipment; fly and bait casting and bait; camping-outfits; fishing-trips.*—JOHN B. THOMPSON ("Ozark Ripley"), care *Adventure*.

Small Boating *Skiff, outboard small launch river and lake tripping and cruising.*—RAYMOND S. SPEARS, Inglewood, California.

Canoeing *Paddling, sailing, cruising; equipment and accessories, clubs, organisations, official meetings, regattas.*—EDGAR S. PERKINS, 5742 Stony Island Ave., Chicago, Ill.

Yachting BERIAH BROWN, Coupeville, Wash., or HENRY W. RUBINKAM, Chicago Yacht Club, Box 507, Chicago, Ill.

Motor Boating GEORGE W. SUTTON, 6 East 45th St., New York City.

Motor Camping JOHN D. LONG, 1133 Broadway, New York City.

Motor Vehicles *Operation, operating cost, legislative restrictions, public safety.*—EDMUND B. NEIL, care *Adventure.*

All Shotguns *including foreign and American makes; wing shooting.* JOHN B. THOMPSON ("Ozark Ripley"), care *Adventure.*

All Rifles, Pistols and Revolvers *including foreign and American makes.*—DONEGAN WIGGINS, R. F. D. 3, Box 75, Salem, Ore.

Edged Weapons, and Firearms Prior to 1880. *Swords, pikes, knives, battle-axes, etc., and all firearms of the flintlock, matchlock, wheel-lock and snaphaunce varieties.* DONEGAN WIGGINS, R. F. D. 3, Box 75, Salem, Oregon.

Archery EARL B. POWELL, 3801 Magnolia St., New Orleans, La.

First Aid on the Trail *Medical and surgical emergency care, wounds, injuries, common illnesses, diet, pure water, clothing, insect and snake bite; industrial first aid and sanitation for mines, logging camps, ranches and exploring parties as well as for camping trips of all kinds. First-aid outfits. Meeting all health hazard of the outdoor life, arctic, temperate and tropical zones.*—CLAUDE P. FORDYCE, M. D., Falls City, Neb.

Health-Building Outdoors *How to get well and how to keep well in the open air, where to go and how to travel, right exercise, food and habits, with as much adaptation as possible to particular cases.*—CLAUDE P. FORDYCE, M. D., Falls City, Neb.

Hiking CLAUDE P. FORDYCE, M.D., Falls City, Neb.

Camp Cooking HORACE KEPHART, Bryson City, N. C.

Mining and Prospecting *Territory anywhere on the continent of North America. Questions on mines, mining law, mining, mining methods or practise; where and how to prospect; how to outfit; how to make the mine after it is located; how to work it and how to sell it; general geology necessary for miner or prospector, including the precious and base metals and economic minerals such as pitchblende or uranium, gypsum, mica, cryolite, etc. Questions on investment excluded.*—VICTOR SHAW, Box 958, Ketchikan, Alaska.

Forestry in the United States *Big-game hunting, guides and equipment; national forests of the Rocky Mountain States. Questions on the policy of the Government regarding game and wild animal life in the forests.*—ERNEST W. SHAW, South Carver, Mass.

Tropical Forestry *Tropical forests and forest products; their economic possibilities; distribution, exploration, etc.*—WILLIAM R. BARBOUR, care *Adventure.*

Railroading in the U. S., Mexico and Canada *General office, especially immigration, work; advertising work, duties of station agent, bill clerk, ticket agent, passenger brakeman and rate clerk. General Information.*—R. T. NEWMAN, P. O. Drawer 368, Anaconda, Mont.

Aviation *Airplanes; airships; airways and landing fields; contests; Aero Clubs; insurance; laws; licenses; operating data; schools; foreign activities; publications. No questions on stock promotion.*—LIEUT.-COL. W. G. SCHAUFFLER, JR., 2940 Newark St., N. W., Washington, D. C.

Army Matters, United States and Foreign LIEUT. GLENN R. TOWNSEND, Fort Snelling, Minn.

Navy Matters *Regulations, history, customs, drill, gunnery; tactical and strategic questions, ships, propulsion, construction, classification; general information. Questions regarding the enlisted personnel and officers except such as contained in the Register of Officers can not be answered. Maritime law.*—LIEUT. FRANCIS GREENE, U. S. N. R., 2200 Kinzie Ave., Racine, Wis.

State Police FRANCIS H. BENT, JR., care *Adventure.*

Royal Canadian Mounted Police PATRICK LEE, Tudor Hall, Elmhurst, L. I.

Horses *Care, breeding, training of horses in general; hunting, jumping, and polo; horses of the old and new West.*—THOMAS H. DAMERON, 911 S. Union Ave., Pueblo, Colo.

Dogs JOHN B. THOMPSON ("Ozark Ripley"), care *Adventure.*

Ornithology PROF. ARCHIBALD RUTLEDGE, Mercersburg Academy, Mercersburg, Pa.

Photography *Information on outfitting and on work in out-of-the-way places. General information.*—PAUL L. ANDERSON, 36 Washington St., East Orange, New Jersey or SIGISMUND BLUMANN, Claus Spreckel Bldg., San Francisco, Cal.

Linguistics and Ethnology *(a) Racial and tribal tradition, history and psychology; folklore and mythology. (b) Languages and the problems of race migration, national development and descent (authorities and bibliographies). (c) Individual languages and language-families; interrelation of tongues, their affinities and plans for their study.*—DR. NEVILLE WHYMANT, 345 W. 23rd St., New York City.

American Anthropology North of the Panama Canal *Customs, dress, architecture, pottery and decorative arts, weapons and implements, fetishism, social divisions.*—ARTHUR WOODWARD, Museum of American Indians, 155th St. and Broadway, N. Y. City.

Taxidermy SETH W. BULLOCK care *Adventure.*

Herpetology *General information concerning reptiles (snakes, lizards, turtles, crocodiles) and amphibians (frogs, toads, salamanders); their customs, habits and distribution.*—DR. G. K. NOBLE, American Museum of Natural History, 77th St. and Central Park West, New York, N. Y.

Entomology *General information about insects and spiders; venomous insects, disease-carrying insects, insects attacking man, etc.; distribution.*—DR. FRANK E. LUTZ, Ramsey, N. J.

Stamps H. A. DAVIS, The American Philatelic Society, 3421 Colfax Ave., Denver, Colo.

Coins and Medals HOWLAND WOOD, American Numismatic Society, Broadway at 156th St., New York City.

Radio *Telegraphy, telephony, history, broadcasting, apparatus, invention, receiver construction, portable sets.*—DONALD MCNICOL, 132 Union Road, Roselle Park, N. J.

SPORTS

Baseball FREDERICK LIEB, the *Evening Telegram*, 73 Dey St., New York City.

Track JACKSON SCHOLZ, 73 Farmington Ave., Long MEADOW, Mass.

Tennis FRED HAWTHORNE, Sports Dept., New York *Herald Tribune*, New York City.

Basketball JOE P. CARR, 16 E. Broad St., Columbus, Ohio.

Bicycling ARTHUR J. LEAMOND, 469 Valley St., South Orange, New Jersey.

Swimming LOUIS DEB. HANDLEY, 260 Washington St., N. Y. C.

Skating FRANK SCHREIBER, 2226 Clinton Ave., Berwyn, Ill.

Skiing and Snowshoeing W. H. PRICE, 160 Mance St., Montreal, Quebec.

Hockey DANIEL MARKOWITZ, *The Evening Telegram*, 73 Dey St., New York City.

Boxing JAMES P. DAWSON, The New York *Times*, Times Square, New York City.

GEOGRAPHICAL SECTIONS.—Covering climate, topography, natural resources (minerals, timber, agriculture, live-stock, water-power), commerce and industry, institutions, inhabitants, customs, languages, history, opportunities, living conditions, health, outdoor life, hunting, fishing, trapping, camping, equipment, expeditions, adventure, general information. Additional subjects covered by any expert, are mentioned in his section.

The Sea Part 1 *American Waters.* Also ships, seamen, shipping; nautical history, seamanship, navigation, small-boat sailing; commercial fisheries of North America; marine bibliography of U. S.; fishing vessels of the North Atlantic and Pacific banks. (See next two sections.)—BERIAH BROWN, Coupeville, Wash.

The Sea Part 2 *Statistics and records of American shipping.*—HARRY E. RIESEBERG, Apartment 347-A, Kew Gardens, Washington, D. C.

The Sea Part 3 *British Waters.* Also old-time sailoring.—CAPTAIN A. E. DINGLE, care *Adventure.*

The Sea Part 4 *Atlantic and Indian Oceans; Cape Horn and Magellan Straits; Islands and Coasts.* (See also West Indian Sections.)—CAPT. DINGLE, care *Adventure.*

The Sea Part 5 *The Mediterranean; Islands and Coasts.*—CAPT. DINGLE, care *Adventure.*

The Sea Part 6 *Arctic Ocean (Siberian Waters).*—CAPT. C. L. OLIVER, care *Adventure.*

Hawaii DR. NEVILLE WHYMANT, 345 West 23rd St., New York City.

Philippine Islands BUCK CONNOR, L. B. 4, Quartzsite, Ariz.

Borneo CAPT. BEVERLEY GIDDINGS, care *Adventure.*

★ **New Guinea** *Questions regarding the measures of policy of the Government or proceedings of Government officers not answered.*—L. P. B. ARMIT, Port Moresby, Territory of Papua, *via* Sydney, Australia.

★ **New Zealand, Cook Islands, Samoa.** TOM L. MILLS, *The Feilding Star*, Feilding, New Zealand.

★ **Australia and Tasmania** PHILLIP NORMAN, 842 Military Rd., Mosman, Sydney, N. S. W., Australia.

★ *(Enclose addressed envelop with International Reply Coupon for five cents.)*
✠ *(Enclose addressed envelop with International Reply Coupon for three cents.)*

Asia Part 1 *Siam, Andamans, Malay Straits, Straits Settlements, Shan States and Yunnan.*—GORDON MACCREAGH, 21 East 14th St., New York.

Asia Part 2 *Annam, Laos, Cambodia, Tongking, Cochin China.*—DR. NEVILLE WHYMANT, 345 West 23rd St., New York City.

Asia Part 3 *Southern and Eastern China.*—DR. NEVILLE WHYMANT, 345 West 23rd St., New York City.

Asia Part 4 *Western China, Burma, Tibet.* CAPT. BEVERLEY GIDDINGS, care *Adventure.*

★ **Asia Part 5** *Northern China and Mongolia.*—GEORGE W. TWOMEY, M. D., 60 Rue de l'Amirauté, Tientsin, China, and DR. NEVILLE WHYMANT, 345 West 23rd St., New York City.

Asia Part 6 *Japan.*—SIDNEY HERSCHEL SMALL, San Rafael, Calif.

Asia Part 7 *Persia, Arabia.*—CAPTAIN BEVERLEY GIDDINGS, care *Adventure.*

Asia Minor.—DR. NEVILLE WHYMANT, 345 West 23rd St., New York City.

Africa Part 1 *Egypt.*—DR. NEVILLE WHYMANT, 345 West 23rd St., New York City.

✠**Africa Part 2** *Sudan.* W. T. MOFFAT, Opera House, Southport, Lancashire, England.

Africa Part 3 *Tripoli. Including the Sahara, Tuaregs, Caravan trade and caravan routes.*—CAPTAIN BEVERLEY GIDDINGS, care *Adventure.*

Africa Part 4 *Tunis and Algeria.*—DR. NEVILLE WHYMANT, 345 West 23rd St., New York City.

Africa Part 5 *Morocco.* GEORGE E. HOLT, care *Adventure.*

Africa Part 6 *Sierra Leone to Old Calabar, West Africa, Southern and Northern Nigeria.*—W. C. COLLINS, care *Adventure.*

BEADLE, Maison du Coin, Beaulieu-sur-Mer (Alpes Mari-

Africa Part 7 *Cape Colony, Orange River Colony, Natal and Zululand.*—CAPTAIN F. J. FRANKLIN, Gulfport and Coast Enquiry Depot, Turnbull Bldg., Gulfport, Miss.

✠**Africa Part 8** *Portuguese East.* R. G. WARING, Corunna, Ontario, Canada.

Europe Part 1 *Jugo-Slavia and Greece.* LIEUT. WILLIAM JENNA, Fort Clayton, Panama, C. Z.

Europe Part 2 *Albania.* ROBERT S. TOWNSEND, 1447 Irving St., Washington, D. C.

Europe Part 3 *Finland, Lapland and Russia.* In the case of Russia, political topics outside of historical facts will not be discussed.—ALEKO E. LILIUS, care *Adventure.*

Europe Part 4 *Germany, Czecho-Slovakia, Austria, Hungary, Poland.*—THEODORE VON KELER, 153 Waverly Place, New York City.

Europe Part 5 *Scandinavia.*—ROBERT S. TOWNSEND, 1447 Irving St., Washington, D. C.

✠**Europe Part 6** *Great Britain.*—THOMAS BOWEN PARTINGTON, Constitutional Club, Northumberland Ave., W. C. 2, London, England.

Europe Part 7 *Denmark.*—G. I. COLBORN, New Canaan, Conn.

Europe Part 8 *Holland.*—J. J. LEBLEU, 57 Benson St., Glen Ridge, N. J.

Europe Part 9 *Belgium and Luxemburg.*—J. D. NEWSOM, 4 rue des Toxandres, Etterbeek, Brussels, Belgium.

Europe Part 10 *France.*—CYRUS S. ROBERTS, 38 E. 85th St., New York City.

Europe Part 11 *Spain.*—J. D. NEWSOM, 4 rue des Toxandres, Etterbeek, Brussels, Belgium.

South America Part 1 *Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Chile.*—EDGAR YOUNG, care *Adventure.*

South America Part 2 *Venezuela, the Guianas and Brasil.*—PAUL VANORDEN SHAW, 21 Claremont Ave., New York, N. Y.

West Indies *Haiti, Santo Domingo, Porto Rico, Virgin and Jamaica Groups.*—CHARLES BELL EMERSON, Adventure Cabin, Los Gatos, Calif.

Central America *Canal Zone, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, British Honduras, Salvador, Guatemala.*—CHARLES BELL EMERSON, Adventure Cabin, Los Gatos, Calif.

Mexico Part 1 *Northern. Border States of old Mexico Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas.* J. W. WHITEAKER, 1505 W. 10th St., Austin, Tex.

Mexico Part 2 *Southern. Lower California; Mexico south of a line from Tampico to Masatlan.*
—C. R. MAHAFFEY, 236 Fox Ave., San José, Calif.

Mexico Part 3 *Southeastern. Federal Territory of Quintana Roo and states of Yucatan and Campeche.* Also archeology.—W. RUSSELL SHEETS, 301 Popular Ave., Takoma Park, Md.

Newfoundland.—C. T. JAMES, Bonaventure Ave., St. Johns, Newfoundland.

Greenland Also dog-team work, whaling, geology, ethnology (Eskimo).—VICTOR SHAW, Loring, Alaska.

Canada Part 1 *New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.* Also homesteading.—FRED L. BOWDEN, 5 Howard Avenue, Binghamton, New York.

✠**Canada Part 2** *Southeastern Quebec.* JAS. F. BELFORD, Codrington, Ont., Canada.

✠**Canada Part 3** *Height of Land, Region of Northern Quebec and Northern Ontario (except strip between Minn. and C. P. Ry.); Southeastern Ungava and Keewatin.* Also Indian life and habits: Hudson's Bay Co. posts. No questions answered on trapping for profit.—S. E. SANGSTER ("Canuck") 10 E. Jefferson St., Detroit, Mich.

✠**Canada Part 4** *Ottawa Valley and Southeastern Ontario.*—HARRY M. MOORE, Deseronto, Ont., Canada.

✠**Canada Part 5** *Georgian Bay and Southern Ontario.* Also national parks.—A. D. ROBINSON, 115 Huron St., Walkerville, Ont., Canada.

Canada Part 6 *Hunters Island and English River District.*—T. F. PHILLIPS, Department of Science, Duluth Central High School, Duluth, Minn.

✠**Canada Part 7** *Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Mackenzie and Northern Keewatin.*—REECE HAGUE, The Pas, Manitoba.

Canada Part 8 *Yukon, British Columbia and Alberta.* Also Yachting.—C. PLOWDEN, Plowden Bay, Howe Sound, B. C.

Canada Part 9 *The Northw. Ter. and the Arctic, especially Ellesmere Land, Baffinland, Melville and North Devon Islands, North Greenland and the half-explored islands west of Ellesmere.*—PATRICK LEE, Tudor Hall, Elmhurst, Long Island.

Alaska. Also mountain work.—THEODORE S. SOLOMONS, 5647 Lexington Ave., Hollywood, Calif.

Western U. S. Part 1 *Calif., Ore. Wash., Nev., Utah and Ariz.*—E. E. HARRIMAN, 2303 W. 23rd St. Los Angeles, Calif.

Western U. S. Part 2 *New Mexico.* Also Indians, Indian dances, including the snake dance.—F. H. ROBINSON, 200-202 Korber Block, Albuquerque, N. M.

Western U. S. Part 3 *Colo. and Wyo.*—FRANK EARNEST, Sugar Loaf, Colo.

Western U. S. Part 4 *Mont. and the Northern Rocky Mountains.*—FRED W. EGLESTON, 1029 Litch Court, Reno, Nev.

Western U. S. Part 5 *Idaho and Surrounding Country.*—R. T. NEWMAN, P. O. Drawer 368, Anaconda, Mont.

Western U. S. Part 6 *Tex. and Okla.*—J. W. WHITEAKER, 2903 San Gabriel St., Austin, Tex.

Middle Western U. S. Part 1 *The Dakotas, Neb., Ia., Kan.*—Especially early history of Missouri Valley.—JOSEPH MILLS HANSON, care *Adventure.*

Middle Western U. S. Part 2 *Mo. and Ark. Also the Missouri Valley up to Sioux City, Iowa. Especially wilder countries of the Ozarks, and swamps.*—JOHN B. THOMPSON, ("Ozark Ripley"), care *Adventure.*

Middle Western U. S. Part 3 *Ind., Ill., Mich., Minn., and Lake Michigan.* Also clamming, natural history, legends.—JOHN B. THOMPSON ("Ozark Ripley"), care *Adventure.*

Middle Western U. S. Part 4 *Mississippi River.* Also routes, connections, itineraries; river-steamer and power-boat travel; history and idiosyncrasies of the river and its tributaries. Questions about working one's way should be addressed to Mr. Spears.—GEO. A. ZEER, Vine and Hill Sts., Crafton P. O., Ingram, Pa.

Middle Western U. S. Part 5 *Lower Mississippi River. (St. Louis down). Atchafalaya across La. swamps, St. Francis River, Arkansas Bottoms.*—RAYMOND S. SPEARS, Inglewood, Calif.

Middle Western U. S. Part 6 *Great Lakes.* Also seamanship, navigation, courses, distances, reefs and shoals, lights and landmarks, charts; laws, fines, penalties; river navigation.—H. C. GARDNER, 3302 Daisy Ave., Cleveland, Ohio.

Eastern U. S. Part 1 *Adirondacks, New York.*—RAYMOND S. SPEARS, Inglewood, Calif.

Eastern U. S. Part 2 *Tenn., Ala., Miss., N. and S. C. Fla. and Ga. Except Tennessee River and Atlantic seaboard.* Also sawmilling, saws.—HAPSBURG LIEBE, care *Adventure.*

Eastern U. S. Part 3 *Maryland and District of Columbia.* Also historical places.—LAWRENCE EDMUND ALLEN, 1505 C St., S. E., Washington, D. C.

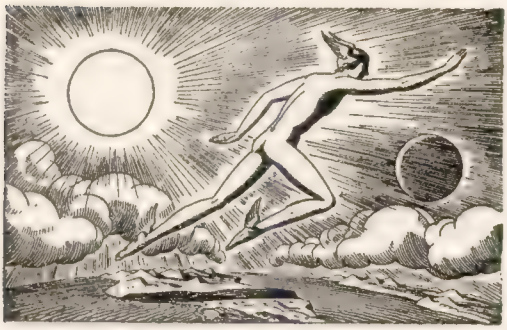
Eastern U. S. Part 4 *Vt., N. H., Conn., R. I. and Mass.*—HOWARD R. VOIGHT, 108 Hobart St., New Haven, Conn.

Eastern U. S. Part 5 *Western Maine. For all territory west of the Penobscot River.*—DR. G. E. HATHORNE, 70 Main Street, Bangor, Me.

Eastern U. S. Part 6 *Eastern Maine. For all territory east of the Penobscot River.*—H. B. STANWOOD, East Sullivan, Me.

ADVENTURE'S TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

A Service Organization with Stations Experts all over the World



WE COULD get along without these two months. Something happens to most of us in February and March. Whether it's the gray days, the gray slush, the erratic blizzards, or something inside of us that is dulled by too-strenuous winter, we all feel it. With some it's physical fag, with others a chronic depression; and it's the wise man who knows enough to get away and snap out of it. Yet this morning-after of the year, the tired time between the brisk days of winter and the stir of spring, is play-time not so many miles or dollars away.

Instead of paying for a new coat or a case of grippe you can have calm, sunny days in the Caribbean that will send you back infinitely refreshed. In little more than a week's time you can touch the ports of four or five countries, you can catch the color of the tropics, and relax in the perfect calm that lies so near to the United States. During these two months ships sail from our ports nearly every day on cruises of varying length and of various cost—from five days to two months and from less than one hundred dollars to more than a thousand.

A short sail from a home port and you find yourself in an island that has a veil of tropic luxuriance cast over the charm of France. In Martinique French villages have slept almost untouched for the last three or four hundred years. In Porto Rico other nations have left their mark. Like several others in this group the rich port's natives were exterminated in the years of slavery imposed by Ponce de Leon after he conquered the island. Many years later the buccaneers who swept up and down these seas plundered Porto Rico whenever they had their attention drawn to it, and used it as a base for operations. Then, under Drake, came the English fleet to sack the wealthy towns. Much of this colorful history is stamped on the island, and its inhabitants—descendants of Spaniards, of pirates, of English soldiers-of-fortune—retain some of the old brutal glamour.

We find peace and rest in the West Indies now, but a rather exciting peace over which hang the ghosts of buccaneers and the shadows of pillage and old wars. No matter how often the traveler has heard the stories of the despot Christophe he can not feel the force of this slave who became a merciless emperor until he sees La Ferrière itself, Christophe's citadel, glowering from a crag in Haiti. The figure that seems almost mythical to us when we read of it in Illinois or Ohio becomes very real here where the superstitions and fears that surrounded Christophe still live.

But the West Indies, South and Central America, and Bermuda offer more than historical glamour. Cuba has become one of the most cosmopolitan spots in the world and gives all the sophisticated excitement of a continental tour. Americans have discovered the charm of the surf breaking on its dazzling beaches, of the carnival spirit in its gay boulevards, of the golf courses where every tee brings one to a new level or nook from which to look out over beauty, of starry evenings with music throbbing inside the hotel and gaiety on brilliant terraces.

In Bermuda there is active outdoor life for those who want it and perfect quiet for the city-tossed folk who sleep and eat and work to the accompaniment of automobile horns and wheels grinding on hard pavements. Here there is nothing along the roads but the drone of insects, hibiscus flowers flaming at every turn and feathery sprays of heather over secluded walls and gates with just the steady clap-clap of the horses' hoofs and occasionally the faint tinkle of a bicycle bell around a curve. (No automobile or motor-cycle allowed on the islands.)

Fishing enthusiasts and hunters find satisfying abundance in the waters and forests of the West Indies or Central America. A short stop at the Virgin Islands gives a man enough fish stories to last the rest of his life and enough varieties of delicious sea food to make him feel an absolute epicure. In Guatemala and Honduras the woods are filled with game of all kinds—deer, Mexican peccary, wild musk hogs, wild turkey. The tracks of tapirs, whose flesh makes an appetizing meal, are thick along all the river banks and both fresh water and sea fish and turtles are easily caught.

Abundance, extravagance in nature, color and romance, the semi-tropics at our door are rich in all of them. A few days in Southern seas can flash through these drab, tired days and restore sparkle to the whole fabric of our lives.

When the editor of *Adventure* planned the Caribbean trip he is now taking he wrote a note to T. S. Stribling, of *Adventure's* writers' brigade, and author of "Teeftallow," "Birthright," "Fombombo" and other books. Stribling has spent much time in the West Indies and Latin America and captured some of his impressions in a vivid personal letter to Mr. Hoffman which we are going to print in the March first issue so that other travelers too may be helped by Mr. Stribling's knowledge and stimulated by his quick appreciation of beauty.

If you feel the urge to take one of these trips or any other trip let us help you plan it. Any reader of *Adventure* may become a guest-member of Adventure's Travel Association for the year 1927 by sending his name, address and brief outline of the trip he plans to take to Adventure's Travel Association, Butterick Building, New York City. Permanent memberships are to be issued in 1928 to guest-members who have traveled during 1927.

The following services are given free to guest-members until January 1, 1928:

1. Information from the central office on all phases of travel anywhere—railroad and steamship facilities, hotels, places of interest and general information.

2. The service of those cooperating factors which we select to handle your specific inquiry by sending at our request descriptive booklets, maps, expense estimates and similar data.

3. First-hand information from the large staff of "Ask Adventure" experts who, because they have lived in their territories for many years, are thoroughly equipped to answer questions on living conditions, expenses, fishing, hunting, camping, etc. In connection with this Question and Answer division are also the "Straight Goods" and book review services from which you can secure verdicts on outdoor commodities, travel equipment, and travel books.

4. The assistance of local A. T. A. stations wherever you go. At these stations our members are referred to valuable local sources of information, are furnished helpful booklets, advised on road and camping conditions and in every way helped by the Station Keeper to a comfortable, friendly trip.

Members are being enrolled now, and this month information is gladly given by the central office, the cooperating factors, and the "Ask Adventure" experts. Membership cards, together with a list of stations and a complete outline of services available to members, will be issued March 1, 1927.

This first year is one of experimentation and growth and the Association can achieve success only with your cooperation. Enroll now and let us have the benefit of your suggestions and criticisms. We are not handing you a completed plan, but asking you to join us in building a club of friends who are interested in travel and who can, because they form a united group, do much to better travel conditions and to foster friendship and understanding.—L. G.

Old Songs that Men have Sung

Conducted by R. W. GORDON

Devoted to outdoor songs, preferably hitherto unprinted—songs of the sea, the lumber-camps, Great Lakes, the old canal days, the negro, mountains, the pioneers, etc. Send in what you have or find, so that all may share in them. Although this department is conducted primarily for the collection and preservation of old songs, the editor will give information about modern ones when he can do so and if each request is accompanied with self-addressed envelope and sufficient reply postage (not attached). Write to Mr. R. W. Gordon direct (*not* to the magazine), care of Adventure, Spring and Macdougal Streets, New York City.

GENUINE hobo songs seem to be scarce. I have been requesting some ever since the department began, but with little success. In fact, I've begun to wonder whether "any sich animile" exists.

In the past month a number of so-called hobo songs have come in. I can not vouch that they are genuine, for they seem to me to have more of the author about them than I should expect to find. Here they are—what can you tell me about their history?

Hobo Song

(Text from Terrell McKay, Texas.)

All around that water tank
  Waiting for that train,
All tired out and hungry
  From sleeping in the rain;
My heart was filled with sorrow,
  My days were filled with pain—
Five thousand miles away from home
  Nobody knew my name.

I stepped up to that brakeman
  To hand him a line of talk;
He says, "If you've got that money, son,
  I'll see that you don't walk."
My pocketbook was empty,
  Not a penny could I show;
"Get off, get off," that brakeman said,
  And slammed that box-car door.

He put me off at Denver,
  Got stuck on a Denver girl.
You know she was all right
  For she wore that Denver curl.
She was pretty as a picture,
  She was dressed in the fashion too;
But when that train pulled out, boys,
  I bade that girl adieu.

From there I went to Albuquerque,
  And I meant to stay a while,
But the bulls they got my number
  And I had to hit the spile.
I dropped down to El Paso,
  But they also knew me there;
The Judge said, "Thirty days or leave!"
  And I had to take the air.

I hopped on board a rattler
  And beat it across the state;
They threw me off at Corsicana
  And there I met my fate.
I woke up in the hospital,
  I was minus of a leg.
Now that I can roam no more
  To live I have to beg.

That strikes me as the sort of thing that a beggar might have written and had printed on bits of cardboard to distribute in return for whatever amount you cared to contribute. I'm just guessing, of course, but it doesn't sound to me quite like a hobo song. If my guess is right, the verse would spread by means of the printed sheets, other beggars would get hold of it and themselves use it, perhaps with a few changes.

FOR a long time I have refrained from printing any text of "The Hoboes' Convention," feeling that it must be author verse, the work of some clever newspaper reporter. But so many versions have come in to me, no two of them alike, that at last I am forced to say that whatever the origin of the poem it is now the property of the people. It has texts, but no text. How old is it? Most of the versions I have do not mention any date for the supposed convention.

The Bums' Convention

(Text from Robert Helquist, Minn.)

In the year of 1900
  You scarcely hear it mentioned
Of how the hoboes gathered
  To hold their big convention.

On the third of June,
  In the afternoon,
They assembled in a mass,
  Hoboes from Eastport, Me., way down to Eagle Pass.

I looked them over one and all
  And recognized a few,
And if I can remember them
  I'll tell their names to you.

There was "Jack the Slim" from the "Lone Star"
State,
And "Jack the Candy Kid,"
"Lonesome Lou" from Kalamazoo,
And the "San Diego Kid."

"Detroit Red" and "Denver Dan,"
And also "Hell-Fire Jack,"
Andy Lang from the "Lake Shore Gang"
And "Mack from Mackinac."

"Scissor Bill," dressed up to kill,
And the well-known "Portland Arrow,"
"Half-breed Joe" from Mexico,
And the "Philadelphia Sparrow."

"Tom the Sneak" from Cripple Creek
And also "Dirty Mike,"
And here met Pete with his great big feet
And also "Yiddish Ike."

We sat around the "jungle" fire
And talked till the day drew near
Of how we'd ride on a comet's tail
And shoot through the atmosphere.

We started in to sing a song,
When some one heard a clatter—
'Twas the footbeats of a squad of "bulls,"
And maybe we didn't scatter!

We beat it over border lines
And into other states;
Some rode the blinds on passengers,
While others pulled out on freights.

I found myself in Denver,
Colorado, as you know,
And the first fast train that pulls through here
Yours truly's going to go.

Toot! Toot! there goes the "highball,"
The engine's on her way!
Number Nine—fast mail for Omaha—
I'm off again! Good day!

THIS last is merely a fragment. It seems to be a parody of the chorus of "The Cruise of the Bigler," a well-known Lake song. It has a real swing to it, and I'd like to have the rest, if any of you know it.

Oh, it's get her! hold her!
Jump into a box car too!
Throw out the rods and loosen the brakes
And the bums will ride her through!
You ought to have heard them holler
And the sight was mighty fine,
For they were "holding down" the Limited
On the Pennsylvania Line!

SEND all contributions of old songs, and all questions concerning them, to R. W. GORDON, care of *Adventure*, Spring and Macdougal Streets, New York City.

Camp-Fire Buttons—To be worn on lapel of coat by members of Camp-Fire—any one belongs who wishes to. Enameled in dark colors representing earth, sea and sky, and bears the numeral 71—the sum of the letters of the word Camp-Fire valued according to position in the alphabet. Very small and inconspicuous. Designed to indicate the common interest which is the only requisite for membership in Camp-Fire and to enable members to recognize each other when they meet in far places or at home. Twenty-five cents, post-paid, anywhere.

When sending for the button enclose a strong, self-addressed, *un*stamped envelope.

If check or money order is sent, please make it out to the Butterick Publishing Company, *not* to any individual.

Back Issues of *Adventure*

WILL SELL—Back issues of *Adventure*, years 1915, 1916 and 1917 complete. Contains some of the best serials and novels published by leading writers of the day. Communicate with Edward F. Medosch, 4204 33d St., Cincinnati, Ohio.

Books You Can Believe—Verdicts of our experts on the reliability of non-fiction books appear in alternate issues.

Forwarding Mail—This office, assuming no responsibility, will be glad to act as a forwarding address for its readers or to hold mail till called for, provided necessary postage is supplied.

Identification Cards—Free to any reader. Just send us (1) your name and address, (2) name and address of party to be notified, (3) a stamped and self-addressed return envelope.

Each card bears this inscription, printed in English, French, Spanish, German, Portuguese, Dutch, Italian, Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Japanese:

"In case of death or serious emergency to bearer, address serial number of this card, care of *Adventure*, New York, stating full particulars, and friends will be notified."

In our office, under each serial number, will be registered the name of bearer and of one or two friends, with permanent address of each. No name appears on the card. Letters will be forwarded to friend, unopened by us. Names and addresses treated as confidential. We assume no other obligations. Cards not for business identification. Cards furnished free *provided stamped and addressed envelope accompanies application.* We reserve the right to use our own discretion in all matters pertaining to these cards.

Metal Cards—For twenty-five cents we will send you *post-paid*, the same card in aluminum composition, perforated at each end. Enclose a self-addressed return envelope, but no postage. Twenty-five cents covers everything.

If check or money order is sent, please make it out to the Butterick Publishing Company, *not* to any individual.

Lost Trails—This department for finding missing friends and relatives is printed only in alternate issues.

Straight Goods—Temporarily this department will appear only in alternate issues.

The Trail *Ahead*

The next issue of ADVENTURE, *February 15th*

Two Complete *Novelettes*

Hunger

By Leonard H. Nason

From the vantage of his tall office stool young *Joseph Marble* saw the proud masts of the ships in the harbor, and his heart was sad. Then one day he went down to the waterfront and signed on a ship with a pretty figurehead—

The Rider from the Desert

A Tale of the Gray Maiden

By Arthur D. Howden Smith

"I believe that sword is a war-breeder," said the deputy governor. And on that blade the keen eye of *Khalid* the Arab, messenger of the prophet Muhammad, rested long and covetously.

An Unusual Narrative

Boyhood

As told to Gordon Young

He became a business man, a dweller in the crowded city, but always there lived with him the memory of his wilderness boyhood—a boyhood such as few men of our time have been privileged to enjoy.

And *Other Good Stories*

On Getting Acquainted, by Raymond S. Spears, *the greenhorn was not easily bluffed;* The Mold of Steel, *a question of sportsmanship*, by Edmund M. Littell; A Steady Job, *the* presidente's *scape-goat*, by Lawrence Rockwell; Part Five of The Fighting Years, by Hugh Pendexter, *new discoveries and fresh perils;* Part Four of Painted Ponies, by Alan LeMay, *the end of the trail.*

Adventure is out on the 1st and 15th of the month

A Hint Worth Taking

When the chill blasts of winter keep you inside, there is always cozy comfort with **Baby Ruth** around.

The whole family—grandma, dad and mother, the young folks, even the tiniest tot—enjoys this delicious candy and finds real nourishment and health-building energy in its wholesome goodness.

Baby Ruth more fully meets the popular favor than any other candy, at any price. Try it yourself! You'll heartily enjoy it!

CURTISS CANDY COMPANY, CHICAGO

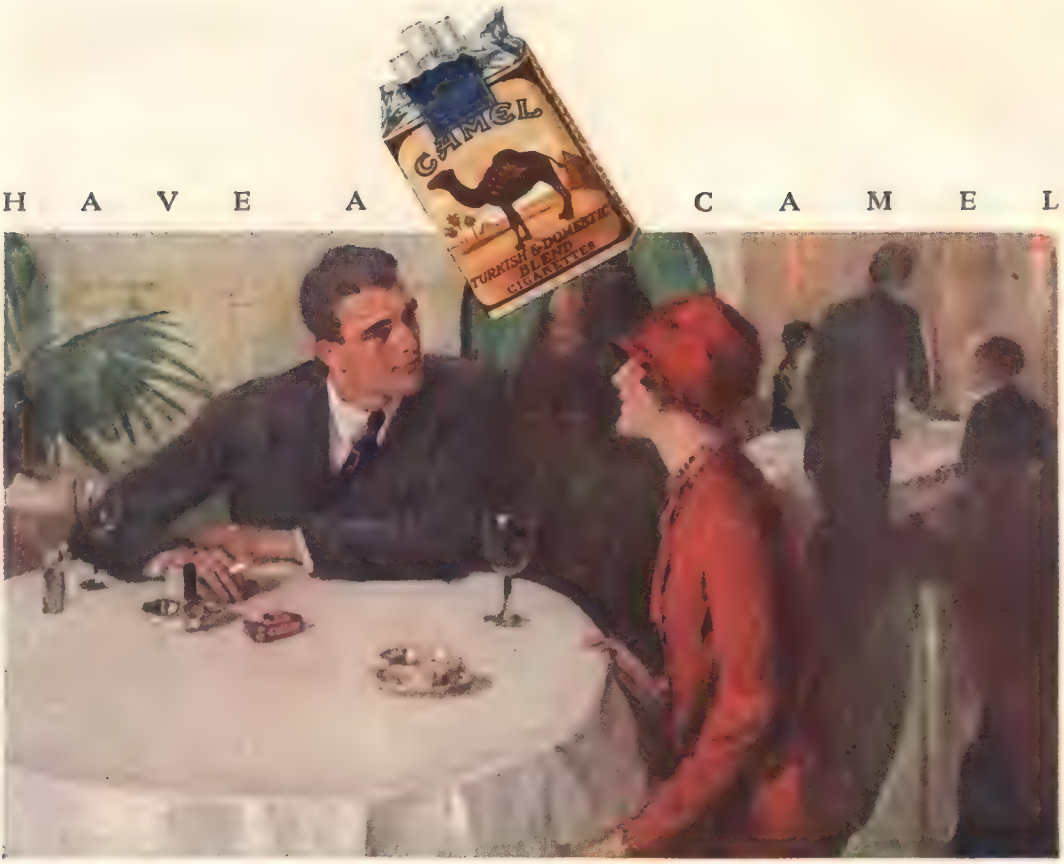
Otto Y. Schnering, President

Candy Makers to the American Nation

CURTISS
Baby Ruth
America's Favorite 5¢

5¢

H A V E A C A M E L



The happiest words in the world

A SAYING becomes universally popular if its expression recalls an experience of pleasure. "Have a Camel!" are the three happiest smoke words ever uttered because no other cigarette ever gave the world so much enjoyment. To millions of experienced smokers, Camels are contentment realized.

Camel has become the most popular smoke of all time because of quality. Camels contain the choicest Turkish and Domestic tobaccos that nature grows. Then these superb tobaccos are given a blending that can be found in no other cigarette. The largest tobacco organization in the world puts its all and its best into Camels. You could smoke, end to end, a mile of Camels—they will never tire the taste, never leave a cigaretty after-taste.

We invite you now to introduce yourself to the finest made.

Millions of friendly voices are calling you to the mildest, mellowest fragrance that ever came from a cigarette. Once you know what they mean, no words can compare with

"Have a Camel!"

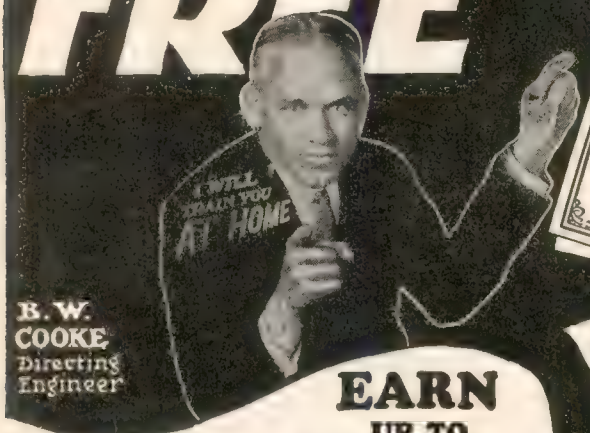
R. J REYNOLDS TOBACCO COMPANY, WINSTON-SALEM, N. C.

© 1927

NOW FREE

B. W. Cooke's FREE TRIAL

6 AUTO Instruction JOBS



B. W. COOKE Directing Engineer

CLIP COUPON 5 BIG OUTFITS Free OF EXTRA COST

EARN UP TO $150 a Week!

If you're earning a cent less than $60 a week, *clip coupon now.* Get the *proof* that you can be on your way to BIG PAY as an Auto Expert QUICK! *See for yourself* how *fascinating* this training is—how easily you can master Auto Work right in your own home—and how *quickly* you can get in line for the *big Auto Jobs* that pay up to *$150 a week and more*—or a Money-Making Auto Business of your own! Remember these Instruction Jobs come to you *ABSOLUTELY FREE* and without obligation. *CLIP COUPON NOW.*

To PROVE

that "JOB-WAY" is "PAY-RAISE" Training

Clip coupon now. I'll send you *absolutely FREE OF CHARGE*—with positively *no obligation* on your part—6 *"JOB-WAY" Instruction JOBS* and my big book! I want you to *SEE for yourself* just why "JOB-WAY" Training is bringing so many men *Big Money* in such *remarkably quick time.* I want you to see how men *without a day's previous auto experience*—and only *common schooling* become Garage Owners, Superintendents, Managers, and earn up to *$150 a week* and more! I want you to see why Hundreds of men have found "JOB-WAY" Training to be such interesting, most practical money-making training!

That's why I make you this unusual offer—with absolutely no strings on it and *not a single penny's charge.*

CLIP COUPON NOW and I'll rush your jobs to you *absolutely Free!*

I'll train you AT HOME

Get these free Instruction Jobs now. See how thorough, how complete "JOB-WAY" Training is—includes all Electrical work—Ignition, Starting, Lighting—all Mechanical, also Welding, Brazing, Vulcanizing—also Business Course, Salesmanship, Advertising—How to Keep Simple Books—also Students' Magazine, also 5 Working Outfits. Nowhere else can you get this original genuine copyrighted B. W. COOKE "JOB-WAY" Training.

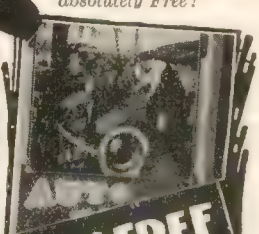
BE AN AUTO EXPERT

The World's Biggest Business Needs You

There are so many *Tremendous Opportunities* in this gigantic Auto Industry that I want every ambitious man *who really wants to make more money,* TO HAVE these 6 Instruction Jobs, just to see how easily and quickly I can boost his pay way up. Just think! *Seven thousand Millions of Dollars* are paid to Auto men every year for *upkeep alone—Nineteen Million Dollars a day!* Think what that MEANS TO YOU—the Big Pay Opportunities open to you as a Cooke trained auto expert! It's the ONE field for the man who wants a BIG pay check! LEARN ALL ABOUT IT NOW!

This Big Auto Book Also Free;

Coupon brings this startling, revolutionary Auto Book, too, absolutely Free! Shows how hundreds of men have reached Big Pay in amazingly quick time! Shows what you can do. Send for it now!



Act Quick!

Don't delay a minute. Send coupon right now while I can still make you this special offer of 6 *Auto Instruction Jobs absolutely free*—as well as my Big Auto Book, *free too!* Act now!

Coupon Brings Full Details of My 5 OUTFITS OFFER

Includes Tools, Tool Bag, Electrical Test Bench and Radio Receiving Set—all Equipment. Also 203 Wiring Diagram Charts, also Socket Wrench and Ignition Wrench sets.

B. W. COOKE DIRECTING ENGINEER

CHICAGO MOTOR TRAINING CORPORATION

1916 Sunnyside Ave., Dept 138, Chicago

SEND ME LESSONS and BOOK FREE

B. W. COOKE,
1916 Sunnyside Ave.,
Dept. 138, Chicago

Send me **absolutely FREE** and without any obligation on my part, **6 Auto Instruction Jobs.** Also your **Auto Book FREE** and full particulars of your **5 Outfits Offer.**

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

TOWN.....STATE.....

BAYER

Genuine

ASPIRIN

SAY "BAYER ASPIRIN" and INSIST!

Unless you see the "Bayer Cross" on tablets you are not getting the genuine Bayer Aspirin proved safe by millions and prescribed by physicians for 25 years.

DOES NOT AFFECT THE HEART

Safe → Accept only "Bayer" package which contains proven directions.
Handy "Bayer" boxes of 12 tablets
Also bottles of 24 and 100—Druggists.

Aspirin is the trade mark of Bayer Manufacture of Monoaceticacidester of Salicylicacid

The most absurd, the most laughable story you've read in a blue moon

The Bungalooboohoo Lion

by John Dudley Phelps

in the February Everybody's—Now an All-Fiction Magazine

Everybody is Playing the "JAZZITHA"

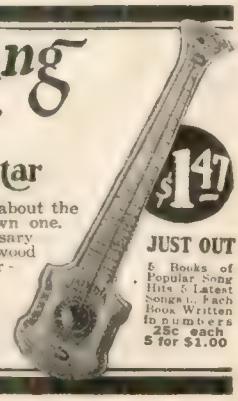
The one string Hawaiian Guitar

Have you seen the latest Jazz instrument? Everybody is talking about the curious, unusual "Jazzitha." If you hear it you will want to own one. Boy! -what music! Play all the song hits immediately; absolutely no instructions or lessons necessary music is written in numbers. Makes an ideal gift. The "Jazzitha" is made of fine grained hard wood with specially designed metal sound box. Handsomely decorated and beautifully finished in lacquer - 19 inches in length. Comes with bar and pick.

Send No Money Just your name and address when Jazzitha and sheet music arrive, pay postman only $1 47 -plus a few cents extra for postage Outside of U S send check or money order.

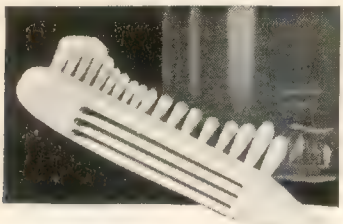
FREE—with every instrument we will include 3 extra Jazzitha strings worth 25c.

THE JAZZ STUDIOS, 2512-41 Ave., Dept. 548, Long Island City, N. Y.


$1.47

JUST OUT

5 Books of Popular Song Hits 5 Latest Songs in Each Book Written in numbers 25c each 5 for $1.00



Dry, firm—*live*—every morning

THE *most faithful brushing is not enough*—if your tooth brush is damp, oversoft—"dead"—every time you use it.

The Pebeco Tooth Brush—*ventilated*—is never moist, weak—because it dries quickly. Its firm, "live" bristles clean between your teeth, stimulate your gums. And its *two tufts* reach every part of your teeth. All druggists. Made only by Pebeco, Inc., Bloomfield, N. J.

PEBECO
VENTILATED
Tooth Brush

Play the HAWAIIAN GUITAR just as the Natives do

FREE when you enroll $15 HAWAIIAN GUITAR and Case

Only 4 Motions used in playing this fascinating instrument. Our native Hawaiian instructors teach you to master them quickly. Pictures show how. Everything explained clearly.

Play in Half Hour
After you get the four easy motions you play harmonious chords with very little practice. No previous musical knowledge necessary.

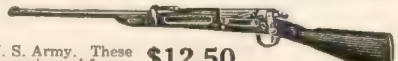
Easy Lessons
Even if you don't know one note from another, the 52 printed lessons and the clear pictures make it easy to learn quickly. Pay as you play.

Free Guitar
and Outfit in Genuine Seal Grain Fabrikoid Case as soon as you enroll. Nothing to buy—everything furnished. No delay.

Write at Once
You'll never be lonesome with this beautiful Hawaiian Guitar. Write for Special Offer and easy terms. A postcard will do. ACT!

FIRST HAWAIIAN CONSERVATORY of MUSIC, Inc.
9th Floor, Woolworth Bldg., Dept. 134 New York, N. Y.
Approved as a Correspondence School Under the Laws of the State of New York

KRAG CARBINES



Cal. 30-40 U. S. Army. These carbines are a universal favorite with big game hunters and riflemen. Extremely accurate and powerful. Carbines have seen service but are in excellent serviceable condition. Micrometer sight, 20-in. barrel. Send **$2.50** balance **$10** C. O. D. Satisfaction guaranteed. Complete catalog on request. **$12.50**

KIRTLAND BROS., 90 Chambers St., Dept. 21, New York

DO YOU WANT TO WRITE FOR PROFIT?

"Frederick Palmer has been of inestimable help to me in improving my technique."

Alex. McLaren

"THE Palmer method of teaching the technique of writing is better than any I have ever heard of," says Alex McLaren, author of "Superlative Savvy," and "Scrambled Brains" in *Adventure Magazine*. "If I had taken the Short Story Course when I was first trying to write, I would have saved years of struggle. The Palmer faculty includes a group of cultured, experienced writers and teachers that cannot be equaled in any university in the country."

Haven't you had adventures? In your own experience . . . or richer, stranger ones, perhaps, schemed out in your imagination? The Palmer Institute can help you write those adventures with a skill! It can equip, quicken, enrich your present talent—help you write stories that sell. Many professional writers have been helped by Palmer training.

Palmer Courses are also endorsed by Carl Clausen, Rupert Hughes, Jim Tully, Gertrude Atherton, Jesse Lynch Williams, Katherine Newlin Burt, Ruth Comfort Mitchell.

PALMER INSTITUTE OF AUTHORSHIP
Palmer Building, Hollywood, Calif. 127-P
CLAYTON HAMILTON - - - - *President*
FREDERICK PALMER - - - *Vice-president*

Please send me, without any obligation, details about the course I have checked.

☐ Short Story Writing ☐ English and Self-Expression
☐ Photoplay Writing

Name _____

Address _____

All correspondence strictly confidential
No salesman will call on you

Selling our magazines won't make you rich—

but it has saved many a person from being poor

The Butterick Publishing Company has hundreds of staff representatives who earn $100 a month.

There are now many opportunities—probably right in your own territory.

We furnish you with the names of old subscribers who are ready to renew.

The work is pleasant, permanent and profitable.

We want full or spare time workers.

Begin now—this is the best season of the year!

Just sign the coupon and mail it TODAY for full information

Butterick Publishing Co.
223 Spring St., New York

Please send me full information how to make money by renewing and selling new subscriptions for your magazines.

Name .....

Address .....

..... Ad 2

AMAZING STORIES FREE

Stories by H. G. Wells, Jules Verne, etc.

In order to get new friends and acquaint readers with the wonderful contents of Amazing Stories, the magazine that has grown to an enormous circulation overnight, we will send a copy of the latest issue to anyone who writes, **absolutely free.** Amazing Stories for the first time offers you an opportunity to read novels that will hold you spellbound—they have that scientific twist that baffles, and heretofore were only procurable in volume form at a cost of anywhere from $2 to $5 each. Such well known writers as Jules Verne, H. G. Wells, Garrett P. Serviss, and others of equal fame, are among the contributors. In a single issue you get over $2 worth of reading for 25c. Find out for yourself what a wonderfully interesting magazine **Amazing Stories** is by sending for a free introductory copy of the latest issue. Just send your name and address and you will receive it by return mail.

AMAZING STORIES, 51A PARK PLACE, NEW YORK

Captain Dingle's
New Novel
"*Flying Kestrel*"
is running in EVERYBODY'S,
now an all-fiction magazine.
Buy a copy to-night!

LAW

STUDY AT HOME

Become a lawyer. Legally trained men win high positions and big success in business and public life. Be independent. Greater opportunities now than ever before. Big corporations are headed by men with legal training. Earn

$5,000 to $10,000 Annually

We guide you step by step. You can train at home during spare time. Degree of LL.B. conferred. LaSalle students found among practicing attorneys of every state. We furnish all text material including fourteen-volume Law Library. Low cost, easy terms. Get our valuable 108-page "Law Guide" and "Evidence" books FREE. Send for them NOW.

LaSalle Extension University, Dept. 276-L, Chicago
The World's Largest Business Training Institution

ACTING PLAYS

For Amateurs Monologs, Recitations, Drills, Minstrel and Vaudeville Jokes and sketches; ideas for entertainment.

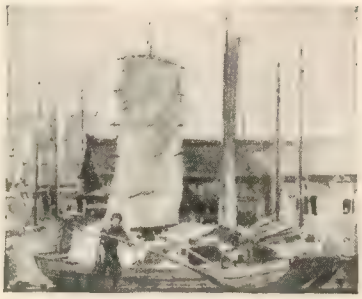
Send for Free Catalog

DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY
542 South Dearborn Street : Chicago, Ill.

LEARN TO Mount Birds

Learn at home by mail to mount Birds, Animals, Heads, Tan Furs and Make Rugs. Be a taxidermy artist. Easily, quickly learned by men, women and boys. Interesting and fascinating. Decorate home and den. *Make Big Profits from Spare Time.* Yes absolutely **FREE**—beautiful book telling **Free Book** all about how to learn taxidermy. Send **Today** for this wonderful new book. **Don't Delay!**
N. W. School of Taxidermy, 1012 Elwood Bldg., Omaha, Neb.

Radio Ops See Foreign Lands



Radio operators on ships have marvelous opportunity for travel and adventure. They earn good pay—in addition to board and sleeping quarters.

Study at home now for a voyage next summer.

Radio Institute of America—world's oldest radio school—offers Home Study Courses that qualify you to pass the U.S. Government Commercial or Amateur License examinations.

RIA also conducts a special technicians' course for radio dealers, jobbers and service men. Write for booklet.

RADIO INSTITUTE OF AMERICA
Formerly Marconi Institute *Established in 1909*
324½ Broadway, New York City

Mail coupon for free 40-page booklet.

SEND THIS IN

Radio Institute of America B
324½ Broadway, New York City
Please send me your free booklet.

☐ I am interested in the radio course which prepares for the Government Commercial, Broadcast or Amateur License.

☐ I am interested in the technicians' course for jobbers, dealers and service men.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

You'll Get a Kick *out of the new*

Everybody's

Now an All-Fiction Magazine of Vigorous Stories

Features You'll Particularly Enjoy in the February Issue—*Now on Sale*

Beatrice Grimshaw's new novel of the dark islands of the Pacific—"*Black Sheep's Gold.*"

* * *

Captain Dingle's brutal saga of the sea, of men and mutiny, "*Flying Kestrel.*"

* * *

A particularly exciting novelette of the old West—"*War Along Big Creek*" by Charles Wesley Sanders.

"*Metal Props*"—The very first story written by a man who knows and loves flying.

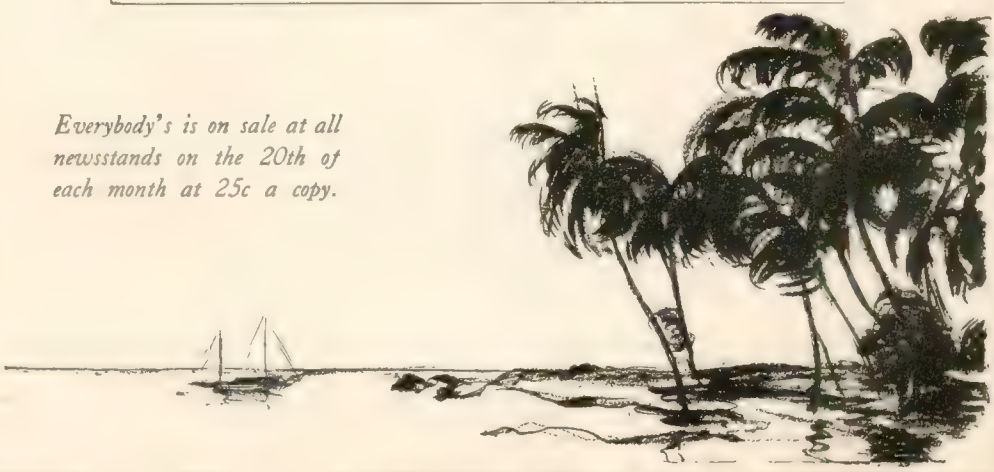
* * *

"*The Bungalooboohoo Lion*"—the most absurd and laughable story you've read in a blue moon.

* * *

A great story of the great war—"*Mlle Belgique*" by Ared White.

Everybody's is on sale at all newsstands on the 20th of each month at 25c a copy.



All-Expense Tour to Europe

37 days Summer of 1927 for $385

YOU can go abroad for thirty-seven days or more, at modest expense, with the Art Crafts Guild Collegiate Tours. Our congenial parties are composed of college students, teachers, artists, club members and professional people—each party personally conducted. A dance orchestra from a famous American University accompanies each tour. Plenty of deck space on shipboard for dancing, games, rest and recreation. See England, Holland, Belgium and France—37 days, All-Expense Trip, Personally Conducted, $385.

via Canadian Pacific

"World's Greatest Travel System"

Weekly sailings from Montreal and Quebec during June, July and August. Two days down the picturesque St. Lawrence. Only four days open sea. A week in London. Eight days in Paris. Three days in Ostend. Fascinating trips to English castles, the Shakespeare country, Oxford, The Hague, Bruges, the battle areas and other places famed in history and literature. Ample time for individual sight-seeing and shopping.

Tour price includes all necessary expense on ship and shore. Extensions to Scotland, Ireland, Switzerland, Germany and Italy at moderate cost.

Write for illustrated literature giving complete detailed itinerary.

Art Crafts Guild Travel Bureau
Dept. 342 500 N. Dearborn St. Chicago, Ill.

ART CRAFTS GUILD
Collegiate Tours

SPECIAL OFFER—EXPRESS PREPAID AND

TYPEWRITER PRICES REDUCED

FREE TRIAL

ON ALL STANDARD MAKES

Big bargains, easy payments on *late model* Underwoods, Royals, L. C. Smiths, Remingtons, etc.—perfect machines expertly remanufactured by the "Young Process," guaranteed like new for five years. Shipped direct from our factory to you at big saving.

Our big illustrated catalog sent *free and without obligation* to buy. Write for yours today.

Young Typewriter Co., Dept. 1031 654 W. Randolph St., Chicago, Ill.

$4.50

Spencer Magazine Carbine

Lever action, 5 shot, caliber 50 rim fire. Weight 7 lbs. 37 inches long; barrel 20 inch; in good order. **Price, $4.50 each.** Ball cartridges $1.50 per 100. **15 Acres Army Goods, New Catalog 1925, 60th Anniversary** issue, 372 pages, fully illustrated, contains pictures and information of all American military guns and pistols since 1775, also rifles, revolvers, uniforms, tents, knapsacks, saddles, war medals, etc. Mailed 50c stamps. **Special New Circular** for 2c stamp. Est. 1865.

Francis Bannerman Sons, 501 Broadway, New York City

BUILD SHIP MODELS

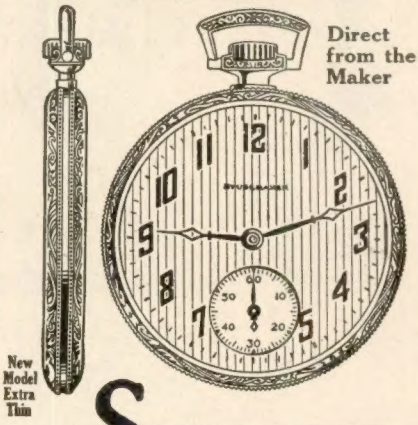
Free catalog of plans, books, prints, maps and other things that smack of the sea.

SEA ARTS GUILD
405-C Eleventh Ave., Milwaukee, Wis.

---

21 Jewel ~ Extra thin

STUDEBAKER
The *Insured* Watch



SENT FOR $1.00 DOWN!

Only $1.00! The balance in easy monthly payments. You get the famous Studebaker 21 Jewel Watch—Insured for a lifetime; a choice of 60 new Art Beauty Cases; 8 adjustments, including heat, cold, isochronism and 5 positions—***direct from the maker*** at lowest prices ever named on equal quality.

Write today for FREE BOOK of Advance Watch Styles.

Watch Chain FREE!

For a limited time we are offering a beautiful Watch Chain FREE. Write now while offer lasts.

Mail Coupon for FREE Book

Send at once and get a copy of this book—FREE! See the newest, beautiful, advance styles in Studebaker Art Beauty Cases and Dials. Read how you can buy a 21 Jewel Studebaker Insured Watch direct from the maker—save big money—and pay for it on easy monthly payments.

Write! for our free book. It will post you on watch styles and watch values. Send coupon at once. Get Free Chain offer today while it lasts.

STUDEBAKER WATCH CO.
Dept. H-705 South Bend, Indiana
Canadian Address: Windsor, Ontario

STUDEBAKER WATCH CO.
Dept. H-705, South Bend, Indiana

Please send me your Free Book of Advance Watch Styles and particulars of your $1.00 down offer.

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... *State* .....

4 out of 5 needlessly suffer

Neglect your teeth and gums, and you open wide the door to vicious Pyorrhea. That is the simple reason why four out of five after forty (and many younger) suffer its dread effects, paving the way to serious sickness, loss of health and beauty.

So dangerous and yet so unnecessary! With reasonable care, you need never fear the ravages of Pyorrhea. Make it a rule to see your dentist twice a year. And start using Forhan's for the Gums, today.

Forhan's used in time, thwarts Pyorrhea or checks its course. It firms the gums and keeps them healthy. It protects teeth against acids which cause decay. It keeps them snowy white.

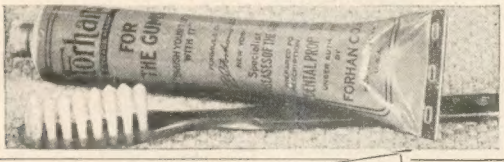
Forhan's, the formula of R. J. Forhan, D.D.S., contains Forhan's Pyorrhea Liquid, used by dentists everywhere.

Start the Forhan habit today and use it regularly morning and night. Teach your children this habit. It is pleasant tasting. It is health insurance. Safeguard youth and health– get a tube today! At all druggists 35c and 60c.

Forhan Company, New York

Forhan's *for the gums*

MORE THAN A TOOTH PASTE . . *IT CHECKS PYORRHEA*



You can be sure of this

Thousands are keeping their breath sweet and fresh this new way. We promise that you'll never go back to ordinary mouth-washes that only conceal unpleasant breath with embarrassing odors of their own after you have used this new Forhan's Antiseptic. It is refreshing and odorless. Try it.

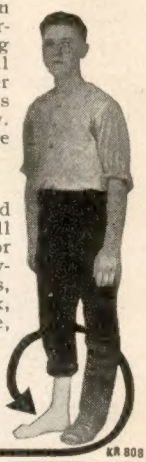
INFANTILE PARALYSIS

caused Harold Hovis to walk on his toes for 11 years. Photos and parents' letter show how McLain Sanitarium helped him:

Am sending you a picture of Harold so you can see how nice his foot looks. I always say a good word to people afflicted in any way because I know you can do the same for them.

MR. AND MRS. WILLIS HOVIS,
Sidney, Illinois.

McLain Sanitarium (established 1898) is a private institution devoted to treatment of crippled children and young adults. No surgical operation requiring chloroform or general anaesthetics. Plaster Paris not used. Patients received without delay. Parents retain full charge of children if desired.



WRITE FOR FREE BOOKS

"Deformities and Paralysis," and "References," which show and tell of McLain Sanitarium's facilities for treating Club Feet, Infantile Paralysis, Spinal Diseases and Deformities, Hip and Knee Disease, Wry Neck, Etc. Also illustrated magazine, *Sanitarium News*, mailed free every 60 days.

McLain Orthopedic Sanitarium
954 Aubert Ave., St. Louis, Missouri, U. S. A.

KR 808

Accounting
THE CONTROL OF BUSINESS

Accountants command big income. Thousands needed. About 9,000 Certified Public Accountants in U. S. Many earn $5,000 to $20,000. We train you thoroly at home in your spare time for C. P. A. examinations or executive accounting positions. Previous bookkeeping knowledge unnecessary— we prepare you from ground up. Our training is supervised by Wm. B. Castenholz, A. M., C. P. A., assisted by staff of C. P. A.'s. Low cost—easy terms. Write now for valuable 64 page book free.

This Book FREE!

LaSalle Extension University, Dept. 276-H, Chicago

Learn to Mount Birds

Learn at home to mount birds, animals, game heads; tan furs, make rugs and robes. Complete lessons. Easily and quickly learned by men, boys and women.

FREE Write for **Free Taxidermy Book.** Tells all about it. Every sportsman, trapper and Nature lover **should** know this wonderful fascinating art. Save your trophies. Big profits. Success guaranteed. 100,000 graduates. Investigate. Write for Free Book.

Northwestern School of Taxidermy 1402 Elwood Bldg., Omaha, Neb.

CHAPPING - SORES

One treatment soothes the irritation and starts the healing if you use

Resinol

Your Outdoor America means adventure to you,

if the efforts of the Izaak Walton League of America, to preserve and restore our great American Outdoors, are successful.

Every League member is now doing his part in this great work.

Your membership in the Izaak Walton League of America is solicited.

Over 2500 Chapters throughout the Country.

There is a Chapter near you.

Membership in the Izaak Walton League of America includes a yearly subscription to

Outdoor America

The best outdoor magazine published

Write:

ED. H. PHILIPPI, ***Executive Secretary***

Izaak Walton League of America

536 Lake Shore Drive **Chicago, Illinois**

DANDRUFF?

It speaks for itself—

UNLIKE halitosis, you don't need a best friend to tell you that you have loose dandruff. You can find out for yourself in case you haven't already looked to see.

Here's a dare! Some day when you have on a dark coat or cloak (the ladies aren't exempt), just brush your hair thoroughly for a few minutes. If you produce that tell-tale shower, it is time to do something about it. Be entirely frank with yourself. Do you know of many things more revolting than signs of loose dandruff? By one glance every other charm may be offset. It is simply disgusting.

But we have good news for you. Listerine and loose dandruff simply do not get along together. You can prove that so easily for yourself. It is very likely that there is a bottle of Listerine on your bath room shelf right now. Just douse it on full strength and rub it in vigorously. Do this for three or four days in succession, and watch the result. You will have one more proof that this company does not make false claims for its products.—*Lambert Pharmacal Company, St. Louis, U. S. A.*

P.S.—It's nice to know that Listerine is not greasy and will not discolor hair or clothes.

LISTERINE

—and dandruff simply do not get along together